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TOMLINSON









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Kansas in Eighteen Fifty-Eight.

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# KANSAS

IN

## EIGHTEEN FIFTY-EIGHT.

BEING CHIEFLY

### A HISTORY

OF THE

## RECENT TROUBLES IN THE TERRITORY.

BY WILLIAM P. TOMLINSON.

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“Kansas, sir, is the Cinderella of the American family. She is buffeted; she is insulted; she is smitten and disgraced; she is turned out of the dwelling, and the door locked against her. There is always, however, a fairy that takes care of the younger daughter, if she be the most honest, the most virtuous, the meekest, and the most enduring of the domestic household.”

SPEECH OF WM. H. SEWARD IN THE U. S. SENATE, 1858.

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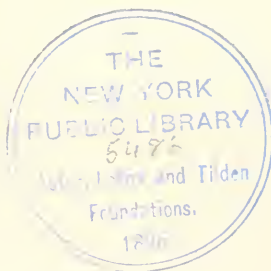
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TO  
REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER,  
THE  
UNWAVERING FRIEND OF KANSAS,  
THIS VOLUME  
*Is Respectfully Dedicated,*  
BY  
THE AUTHOR.





## P R E F A C E.

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THE pages which follow are simply a record of events occurring in the experience of one who has been the eye and ear witness of the greater part of the incidents narrated in this book.

My object in writing it was two-fold. I felt it a *duty* I owed the struggling freemen of Kansas, to disabuse as much as possible the public mind of its many erroneous impressions regarding the recent difficulties in Kansas, commonly known as the "Fort Scott Difficulties ;" and I also wished to preserve the prominent events relating thereto, in the hope that they might be of some assistance to the future historian of Kansas, in giving a permanence to its history and a "deathless fame" to the noble champions of freedom on its soil.

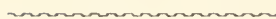
I have therefore been studiously careful that nothing should appear unsupported by truth, and have even softened the tone of many passages for fear their honest warmth of expression would be attributed to the bias of partisan feeling.

As apart from its eventful history, considerable interest is manifested in Kansas, I have devoted a portion of the following work to giving such description of its climate, soil, etc., as I thought would be of benefit to those who meditate emigrating to that Territory.

Portions of the contents appeared as letters in various journals from time to time, as the events to which they referred transpired, and the indulgence shown to some of them by the "Press," encourages the writer to hope that the following work will receive a candid consideration from those whose province it is to direct the public taste.

NEW YORK, Dec. 21, 1858.

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# KANSAS IN 1858.



## CHAPTER I.

### UP THE MISSOURI.

"We cross the prairies as of old  
Our fathers crossed the sea,  
To make the West, as they the East,  
The abode of the free."—WHITTIER.

THE spring of the present year, 1858, was a busy season in the city of St. Louis. The interest felt by the North in the struggle for freedom going on in Kansas exhibited itself in the throngs of emigrants that were daily arriving at St. Louis, en route for that Territory. Many of these emigrants were persons of wealth and standing, who, for the sake of principle, had left comfortable homes in the East. In addition to this, owing to the war with Utah, which was just commencing, there was an unusual number of traders in the city, making ready their wagons and outfits for Santa Fe and Utah. The hotels were crowded with inmates, and steamboats of the largest class were

daily leaving the levee, and passing up the Missouri, loaded down with freight and passengers.

In one of these steamers, the *Polar Star*, I left St. Louis on the morning of the 29th of April, 1858, with the intention of making a few months' sojourn in the Territory of Kansas. The boat was loaded down to her utmost capacity; and even when running at moderate speed, the water broke incessantly over her guards. Her freight was of that nondescript character, indispensable to the prairies, but of an order almost unknown east of the Mississippi. On her hurricane deck were a large number of baggage-wagons, belonging to the United States, in which were piled saddles, harness, camping furniture, &c., in indescribable confusion; and in the hold, besides the usual variety of a traders' and emigrants' outfit, were a large number of mules and horses belonging to a regiment of the United States troops destined for Fort Leavenworth.

The passengers on board the *Polar Star* were as motley composed as her freight. Her steerage was crowded with United States troops, emigrants, mountain men, negroes, &c.; and the cabin was filled with officers of the army, Santa Fe traders, gamblers, speculators, and adventurers of various descriptions, with a few ladies, chiefly the wives of the officers connected with the expedition destined for Utah.

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It was nearly night when we entered the mouth of the Missouri, so slow was our progress against the rapid current of the Mississippi, and so frequent our stoppages at the various landings along the river, to take in wood, freight, &c. The difference between the clear waters of the Mississippi and the turbid current of the Missouri, was plainly distinguishable for some time before approaching the junction of the mighty rivers ; and the passengers of the *Polar Star*, as in duty bound by immemorial custom, thronged to the guards to behold the strange phenomenon, and repeat hacknied sayings concerning the wedlock of the two great currents. The characteristics of the Missouri are peculiar to itself alone. It is constantly changing its course ; wearing away its banks on one side and forming new ones on the other, and thus its channel is continually shifting. Islands are annually formed and washed away, and while the forests on one shore are being undermined and swept off, a new growth of trees spring up on the made-soil of the other. Towns built near the banks of the river not unfrequently share the same fate, and have to be either moved back or abandoned. In consequence of these changes, the water is so charged with earthy matter that it is quite opaque, and a few minutes' rest deposits an inch of sediment on the bottom of a vessel.



Day after day our boat struggled upwards against the swift and turbid current of the Missouri ; now grating upon some concealed snag, and now hanging for hours at a time upon some treacherous sand-bar of too recent a formation for the knowledge of the pilot. Day after day was spread out before the passengers the same unvarying picture of Nature's loveliness. The broad and turbid river, with its sand-bars and its eddies ; its ragged islands and wild, forest-covered shores, were the chief components of the landscapes presented ; for although the adventurous pioneers are fast opening the way for the "march of civilization westward," and towns occasionally dot the river's margin ; the great leading characteristic of the Missouri is isolated grandeur and solitude.

The passengers of the *Polar Star* amused themselves, each to his taste, throughout the long passage. The calm, quiet Kansas settler might be seen on the upper-deck, or in some secluded part of the steamer, poring, perchance, over some map of the territory he sought to visit, or musing on friends "eastward afar." The officers over their "cigarettes" fought their past "battles o'er again," or discoursed on the probable dangers of the distant campaign they were shortly to commence ;—the accomplished gamester and his confederates nightly sought to lure the ignorant and unwary to loss and ruin ;—and the strong men of the



mountains, pent in their close quarters below, cleaned and repolished their trusty fire-arms, and cracking their rude jokes, rejoiced at every mile which bore them further from civilization.

The morning of the ninth day, (May 7th,) we arrived at Kansas City, at which place I intended stopping for a few days previous to proceeding into the Territory. The boat lay at the levee nearly all day discharging her freight, the greater portion of which was shipped to Kansas City. I changed my luggage to the nearest hotel—the “American House”—and was in a few minutes ready to acquaint myself with the chief characteristics of the place.

Kansas City is situated in the western part of the State of Missouri, on the south bank of the Missouri river, about two miles from the line between the State of Missouri and Kansas Territory. It is built on a high bluff, which rises abruptly from the river. At first view it does not impress the beholder very favorably, but a more intimate acquaintance greatly exalts it in his estimation. It is a new town, having been built within a few years. Its great source of prosperity is the Santa Fe trade ; nearly all of which is carried on through Kansas City, its nearest point on the Missouri river. So immense in fact is this trade, and so rapid is the growth of the city, that although at that time it possessed only some four or five thou-

sand inhabitants, some of its sagacious, far-seeing citizens, were indulging in dreams of its becoming a great metropolis, and had already lain out on paper a town-site sufficient to contain several hundred thousand inhabitants. One-third of the whole Missouri river trade at that time was done through Kansas City, and the city and inland trade was rapidly increasing. Speculation ran very high ; building lots were selling at almost fabulous prices, and wages for all kinds of mechanics and laborers were fifty per cent. higher than in the East.

Such was Kansas City in the spring of 1858 ! The change wrought by the summer following was very great. If the state of Missouri succeeds in throwing off the incubus, slavery, which has so long fettered her upward progress, no seer or prophet, howsoever gifted, can foretell the brilliant destiny that awaits Kansas City.

The next day I took a walk out to Westport, and proceeded from thence to the plains of Kansas Territory, where the Santa Fe trains were encamped in "corrals"(1) on the prairies. I went out the Santa Fe road to Westport, and then followed the old California road until I came to where the "corrals" dotted the prairies set apart by the United States government, for the special benefit of the Santa Fe and Oregon trains. It was a beautiful view ;—the great prairie, over whose rolling swells, covered with waving grass,

and variegated with a profusion of beautiful flowers, the herds of a hundred "corrals" were grazing or laying idly on the velvety sward; while on every eminence was the picturesque "corral" of the trader, from which would momentarily dart some Mexican, Indian, or half-breed, mounted on pony or mustang, to visit some neighboring encampment. The trains of the Santa Fe traders encamp on this reservation, while the head-merchants go on to Kansas City or St. Louis, and make their purchases. The cattle, which generally get quite thin from their long journey, have thus an excellent opportunity to rest and pick up in flesh before starting back across the plains.

I have seen a great deal of country—mountain, forest, and prairie—but my eyes never rested on a finer scene than I beheld that May morning. It is a misnomer to call it a "new country"—for those vast, undulating plains, glowing with the richly-colored flowers indigenous to them, and the beautiful groves of trees that skirt the depressions and relieve the abrupt lines of the horizon, present a landscape more beautiful than the oldest civilization with its cultivated fields, parks, and woodlands. The view at once awakens in imagination the romance of oriental lands, and palm trees, groves of oranges, pomegranate, and fig, and the aroma of spices become at once almost palpable to the senses. Then the vast herds of cat-

tle, feeding far and near over the prairie ; the white tents and wagons of the emigrant, and far-traveled Santa Fe trains, with the dusky Mexican teamsters, require but a small stretch of the imagination to be transformed into the caravans of Bagdad, and the Moslem merchants of the East, in their traverse of pastoral lands of Palestine and the plains of Arabia.

I approached one of the "corrals" to have some conversation with those in charge, relative to the peculiar life they were leading. The Spaniards gazed stupidly at me from beneath their broad hats, but the train-master proved to be an American, disposed and able to acquaint me with all I wished to learn. He was apparently about forty years of age, of powerful build, with a clear blue eye, and an honest, open face ; a fair sample of that hardy race of pioneers, who, with their axes and their rifles, are opening the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He told me that he had led a frontier life from boyhood, and that the last eight or ten of it had been spent in California, to which place he was now returning from a visit to a brother living near Independence, having connected himself with a Santa Fe train for greater safety, and to defray expenses.

In my return I called at the Shawnee Mission, which was originally established to educate the Shawnee Indians, and which, after flourishing for some

time, is now rapidly going to decay. It is the oldest mission in the Territory, and is of the Methodist Church South. The buildings are of brick, and are massive and extensive, but very tasteless in appearance. Connected with the mission are three sections of the finest quality of land, which were donated by the Shawnees at the time of its establishment. It was the residence of Gov. Shannon, while he was in office, and has always figured prominently in Kansas history. I was shown over the school by the obliging teacher, and a great deal of curious information imparted me concerning the Indian character. The school had then only about twenty pupils ; but when it was in a flourishing condition it numbered over sixty. One little Shawnee came up to recite his lesson while I was there, and it was interesting to hear his broken English. Mr. —, the teacher, states that they learn readily, and as a general thing are quite docile.

In my route I also called on Capt. Park, the celebrated chief of the Shawnee nation, with whom I became acquainted at Washington. He resides about three miles from Westport, in Johnson Co., K. T., on a splendid farm of two thousand acres : the greater part of which is under cultivation. Contrary to my expectation, he recognized me almost immediately, and invited me into his house, which is a large, brick



structure, furnished in the most comfortable and even elegant manner. He has a large family of children and grand-children around him; two of his grand-children are ladies grown, handsome and accomplished. The old chief is a great talker, and while dinner was preparing, he fought his "past battles o'er again," in many a wild and thrilling narrative. Some of his narratives were highly interesting, showing as they did, the great injustice practiced by the agents of our government against his people. He speaks good English, having been employed for many years as "interpreter" between the Shawnee nation and the "Great Father" at Washington. A great public misfortune will befall the Shawnee nation when they lose their loved chief, for he has their welfare at heart, and his influence over them is almost unlimited. He takes great interest in farming, and has all the new improvements in the way of implements, &c. He values his farm at fifty dollars per acre. It is certainly a splendid property. He still owns a few slaves, but says he wants Kansas to become a *free State*. After spending a couple of hours with him and family very pleasantly, I returned to Westport.

While sauntering around that town with all the nonchalance a wanderer from the "Yankee land" is bound to assume upon all occasions, I could not avoid contrasting the quiet, inoffensive Westport of 1858,

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with the belligerent Westport of 1856, when H. C. Pate raised that gallant band of volunteers, and stimulated by the smiles of the Westport dames and their presented banner, vowed he would never again enter the town of Westport until he brought back that d——d abolitionist Brown and his troop. How he proceeded in the execution of his doughty threat—how he met the little band of Brown, and how that same Brown, though fighting against a force numerically three times superior to his own, forced the gallant Pate to an ignominious surrender, and then paraded him through the territory—are facts known to every reader of Kansas history, and need not be repeated. Pate was still living in Westport, but his paper had gone down and his whilom glory departed. A grandson of the celebrated Daniel Boone was living in Westport at that time. Two years ago no one suspected of being “Free State,” could have entered Westport without being lynched, or at least driven out of the town; but at the time I was there, not only was freedom of speech tolerated, but a large proportion of the citizens were “Free State” in politics.

The next day, Sabbath, I attended Methodist church in the forenoon, and in the afternoon, accompanied by a friend, I took a walk to visit the grave of a relative, who died in Kansas City, in the spring of 1855, while on his way to Kansas. He contracted that

fatal disease, the cholera, while on board the boat, and died in a few hours after being carried into the "American House." Some kind friends took charge of his remains, and had them interred in the common burying-ground, located a short distance from the city. There is a plain tomb-stone erected over his grave, telling his name, age, &c., by which it is distinguished from the grass-covered mounds scattered thick and wide around it.

I cannot describe my feelings while standing over the untimely grave of him whose roughly-chiseled initials on the cold marble told the colder form that lay below. All that I knew of his early career opening full of promise—of his calm, determined stand for the right, unshaken by clamor, and incorruptible ; of his well-attested benevolence to the poor and needy, and his general intercourse with all mankind, rushed with startling vividness across my mind in one resistless torrent of recollection ; and when the friend at my side, who had been his friend, told me how he found him when sent for to visit his dying-bed ; how he closed his stranger eyes, and laid him in his stranger grave with the sorrow of a brother, I could not repress the tears that fell, and were drank up by the prairie flowers that grew in wild luxuriance about his prairie grave. One of the fairest I unearthed from its birth-place, and with reverence I placed it on the spot where



I deemed reposed his once gallant breast, and slowly and solemnly left the grave of poor P——.

The next morning I took passage for Leavenworth City in the steamer *Kate Howard*, a boat of the same class as the *Polar Star*, but superior in some respects. Among the notables on board were Gen. Harney and suite, en route for Salt Lake via Fort Leavenworth. The General is tall and commanding in person, a splendid specimen of our American soldiery, and several of the suite were fine looking men. Every attention was paid the General while on board ; a special suite of rooms was assigned him and suite ; the head of the table given him, &c.

The traveler up the Missouri now sees between the City of Kansas and Fort Leavenworth, quite a number of flourishing towns upon the south-west bank of the river, where but a few years since not the slightest improvement of any kind had been made. Wyandotte, and Quindaro especially, are flourishing places, and offer great inducements to settlers of enterprise. The river was quite high when I went up, but when I came down in the autumn it was unusually low, and all the secrets of its treacherous shallows were exposed to view. It was frightful to behold the trees and various obstructions, thick set along the channel as a military abattis, firmly imbedded in the sand at the bottom, ready to impale any unfortunate steam-

boat that at high water should pass over that dangerous ground.

The Kate Howard touched at the levee of Leavenworth City about noon, and I went ashore. I spent the afternoon of that day in rambling about the place, endeavoring to form a correct idea of its present and future prospects.

Leavenworth City, the present metropolis of Kansas, at that time boasted a population of upwards of eight thousand. It was consequently about twice the size of Kansas City, but its river trade would bear no comparison to that of its rivals'. The town is pleasantly located on the west bank of the Missouri, on a bluff which rises less abruptly from the river than at Kansas City. The houses are chiefly frame, and of cheap construction. At that time there were three weekly and two daily papers ; two theatres, six or seven churches, &c. Speculation was running very high, and building lots were selling at the most extravagant prices.

The next day I went up to the Fort to witness a grand review of the troops before General Harney. Fort Leavenworth, in point of fact, can lay but little claim to the title of fort, as it is without defensive works of any kind, except two block-houses. In beauty of location, however, it has scarcely an equal in my knowledge. It is situated two miles above the

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town of Leavenworth, near the west bank of the Missouri, on a gentle eminence commanding a splendid view of miles and miles of the lordly river.

In the square, grassy area surrounded by the barracks and quarters of the officers, the various regiments and divisions were being mustered under their proper officers, preparatory to the grand parade. It was a splendid sight to see the well-drilled and well-equipped soldiery going through all the minutia and formula of a regular review, and the pleasure in gazing on the pageant was only lessened by the reflection that of the many now gaily stepping to the enlivening strains of music, how few would in all probability return from the far-distant campaign they were shortly to commence ; in which burning suns and disease would doubtless prove far more deadly foes than the "Saints" led on to battle by Brigham Young.

## CHAPTER II.

## A NIGHT WITH THE DELAWARES.

“A nobler race! but they are gone,  
With their old forests, wide and deep,  
And we have built our homes upon  
Fields where their generations sleep.”—BRYANT.

EARLY the next morning, May 12th, I made arrangements for my departure for Lawrence. My heavy luggage I ordered to be sent after me in the stage-coach which was to leave for Lawrence the next day, as I designed commencing at Leavenworth my original plan of travel; which was, viz: to behold a great portion of the Territory on foot, in order that I might become thoroughly acquainted with the country, and its inhabitants.

So making up a small knapsack of eatables and articles that I might need in my journey, and freshly loading my revolver, (nay, start not friends of mine imbued with peace principles, that same *pocket-companion* has been of service to me, and yet the stain of blood rests not upon my soul as I trust it never may,)

I left the streets of the town, and struck the road leading out into the Territory, just as the first rays of the rising sun gilded the broad crest of the Pilot-Knob mountain, on whose broad summit repose the earthly remains of some of the earliest Kansas martyrs.

The sun shone clear and brilliantly, the air was fresh and bracing, and my olden love for the healthful exercise revived within me as I walked briskly forward over a prairie as beautiful as the most beautiful portions of Illinois, or Iowa. In some places, in consequence of a heavy rain a few days previous, the footing was poor, but for the most part the walking was excellent. The Delaware Reserve embraces most of the land lying between Leavenworth and Lawrence, and the country in consequence was but thinly settled. Game of all kind was abundant. Every few yards my steps would give fright to a covey of pheasants, or prairie chickens, which would rise, wheel, and disappear in the air; and turkey and deer were not an uncommon sight. The foot-prints of the prairie-wolf and other animals could be seen along the path-way, and once I got a shot at a large prairie-wolf, but it was too far from me for the ball to take effect.

About noon I arrived at the Big-Stranger Creek, where the coach changes horses, and a dinner is provided for the passengers. It is a wild, lonesome looking place, particularly in the vicinage of the stream,

which runs between steep banks, dark, sullen and rapid. The Half-way house, so called from its being about half-way between the Kaw and Missouri rivers, is a villainous-looking, rum-drinking, and half-breed establishment ; almost totally destitute of the most common requirements of the travelers. While there the coach from Lawrence to Leavenworth came driving up without any passengers, the Jehu being alone in his glory. I asked him if there was any difficulty in keeping the road from there to Lawrence—he said there would not be if I would be careful to follow the track of the coach, which was a broad-wheeled vehicle making a plain trail.

I left the Big-Stranger about 1 p. m., and proceeded onward until I came to a mound known as the "Stranger's Grave," which is close to the way-side some three or four miles from the Half-way house. It is marked by a rude pile of stones, placed there by some friendly hand to keep the wolves from disturbing his remains. He was murdered in 1856, by a roving guerilla party of Missourians. This poor victim of border-ruffian cruelty was a stranger in the Territory, and was on his way to Lawrence at the time of the terrible tragedy. He was left weltering in his blood by these inhuman fiends, until some settlers riding by, shocked at the bloody spectacle presented, hastened to give his lifeless remains interment. Nor



is the case I have cited an isolated one ! The traveler in the Territory of Kansas sees many such 'rude memorials, reminding him in all save scenery of the moving lines of "Childe-Harold :"—

"And here and there, as up the crags you spring,  
Mark many rude-carved crosses near the path,  
Yet deem not these devotions offerings—  
These are memorials frail of murderous wrath,  
For wheresoe'er the shrinking victim hath  
Poured forth his blood beneath tho assassin's knife,  
Some friendly hand erects a cross of mouldering lath,  
And grove and glen with thousands such are rife  
Throughout this goodly land where law secures not life."

It seemed sad to think of his untimely end, stranger as he was to me, and reflect that perhaps "loved ones afar" were still ignorant of his terrible fate ; and were "hoping still against hope" to receive some tidings of their absent one. Some day, when Kansas, freed from outward persecution, is able to make reparation for the past, she may erect over her martyred son a more fitting monument. And until then the tears of every pious way-farer will water the prairie flowers that adorn and beautify his nameless grave.

After leaving the "Stranger's-Grave," it was with the greatest difficulty that I could keep the desired path. The marks of the wheels of the coach were no longer visible on the baked earth, which had grown too hard for the indentation of the wheels to be

distinguishable. Territorial roads crossed and re-crossed the one I was traveling in all directions ; and the trail itself wound around ravines, and over mounds in such a serpentine manner, that it was often a mere matter of guess-work which of two alluring trails to take. Still I struggled on, guided by my pocket-compass, as I knew I wished to pursue a south course, and just before night I saw to the southward a long, dense body of timber, which I knew at a glance could be no other than the woodland that skirted the winding Kaw.

My spirits revived at the welcome sight, and I strode onward with even a more hurried step ; but I had yet to learn how deceiving was the distance at which objects appeared to be when viewed on the broad open prairie ; and although the timber in question, to my unpracticed eyes, appeared but a mile or so distant, an hour's rapid walking still left the woodland at apparently as great a distance.

Night set in gloomily. Not a star could be seen in the concave of heaven, save when the dense clouds that stretched pall-like across the sky, would for a moment break away and reveal them to sight, ere they closed, wrapping all nature in deeper obscurity. Guided by the last lingerings of twilight I gained the timber, but the river was still to reach, and that, owing to the extent and width of the woodland, I was well aware would be the most difficult part of all.—



Still I did not despair. I knew that if I could only strike a trail leading to the Kaw, I could easily find the ferry, after once gaining the banks of the river, and I set myself diligently to work to find the desired trail.

After searching for some time I discovered a path, and immediately commenced threading its labyrinths. It had the appearance of being some traveled, and I congratulated myself on its leading me eventually to the ferry at Lawrence. The only thing that gave me any uneasiness was the length of the path I was threading. I knew that the timber was only a few miles in width, and I had already journeyed, as I thought, far enough to have come to the river-border. The path too, instead of becoming more beaten, as it naturally would leading to a town, sensibly narrowed, and became more and more difficult to keep. Finally it apparently came to an end altogether, and I was left in the forest without any clue by which I might extricate myself from the labyrinth in which I was involved ; and was just preparing to submit myself to the unpleasant idea of spending a night in the woods, when I fancied I heard the faint sounds of distant music.

I rose from the foot of a huge sycamore, where I had from fatigue thrown myself, and listened eagerly for a repetition of the sound. It soon came. I could

not distinguish the character of the music, but clearly and distinctly on the ear fell sounds of a human origin. I did not pause to solve the doubt, but thrusting aside the branches and underwood that impeded my steps, I hastened forward in the direction of the sounds, that as I advanced grew more audible. Far ahead through a vista of trees, twinkled at times a light ; now visible, and now disappearing. Nearer and nearer I drew to what appeared some scene of merriment, and louder grew the sounds of various musical instruments ; and ruddier towards the heavens the fire, I at first beheld so faintly, shot its upward glow. Pushing aside the few remaining obstacles in my way, I stepped quickly forward, and the whole spectacle was revealed to my astonished view.

Gracious Heaven ! I was in the Delaware village, and gazing on an Indian war-dance ! When I first comprehended the peculiar position to say the least in which I was placed, my instantaneously conceived idea was to draw back, and retrace my steps, and pass the night as I had meditated doing ; but I saw in a moment that I was perceived, and that if my strange companions were disposed to prove unfriendly, any attempt that I might make to escape would prove futile.

I therefore walked up to the fire with as unconcerned an air as I could assume, and stood with my blanket

folded around me, awaiting the action of my red-friends on this unceremonious intrusion on their festival. I did not wait long. An old man, one of the Chiefs of the Delawares, approached me, and in broken English inquired of me where I came from, where I was going, &c. I explained to him my benighted condition, and when I inquired of him how far I was from Lawrence, a smile stole over his bronzed features as he replied, counting his fingers :—

“One—two—three—four—five—six miles long, but you stranger ; you no go to-night ; stay with Indian ; to-morrow me show you how to go—.”

The dancing which had ceased for a moment while the old Chief was addressing me, again commenced, and from that moment they were apparently oblivious of my presence. I stepped backward to the outer-edge of the opening, in order that I might observe them without interfering in any way with the proceedings. As some of my readers may feel an interest in the description of a dance among the sons and daughters of the forest, I will devote a few words to sketching the scene I beheld.

Imagine a large opening in the forest, in the centre of which is a huge fire, around which are a number of seats for the old and musicians of the tribe. Beyond the fire, and comprising a circuit of some twenty or thirty yards, is a ring or circle ; hard-beaten as an

oaken floor, and some ten or a dozen feet in width. Around and around this circle would pass the maidens and braves of the tribe, beating a sort of time to the music, which consisted of bones, hard pieces of wood, tin instruments, &c.; united with the deep, guttural voices of the musicians, about as follows :—

“ He-ah-hum-he-hum-hah, he-he-hum-haw-hum,  
He-ah-haw-haw-he-ah, he-ah-hum-hum-mah,  
He-ah-hee-hee-eah, he-haw-hum-hee-hee-ah,”

with a number of variations.

The cause of the present dance, as I learned from the old Chief who first addressed me, was the fitting out of a party from their tribe, who were to leave the next morning on a hunting and war-like expedition to the western part of the Territory. It is a singular fact in history, that the Delawares, though once the peaceful allies of Wm. Penn, have been the most adventurous and dreaded warriors that have roved the western prairies. They have made war upon remote tribes of Indians whose very names were unknown to their Fathers in Pennsylvania, for no other object than plunder ; and have even sent out war-parties as far west as Oregon, and the Rocky Mountains. They have consequently declined in numbers every year ; while some of the neighboring tribes who have turned their attention to husbandry, &c., have increased, rather than diminished in population.

For hours I stood in the position I have described, and gazed on that strange forest scene. The Indian maidens with their fanciful adornments of beads and head-dresses; and the young Delawares tall and stately, with their all-manner of decorations, as they moved, now slow, now fast around the fire-lit circle, were components of a picture on which I could scarcely weary of gazing. When, however, the fires burned low, and the dancers sank exhausted with incessant action, I threw myself upon the couch of skins prepared for me in the hut of my Indian friend, and slept soundly until morning.

Long before I awoke in the morning, the hunting party had departed on their long journey, and, after partaking of some coarse corn cake and smoked venison, I left the Delaware village, accompanied by the old Chief alluded to, who did not leave me until he put me on the stage-road to Lawrence. His knowledge of English was tolerably good, and the time passed very pleasantly in conversation on subjects with which he was familiar. He spoke feelingly of the decline of his people, who now only number some two or three hundred of the tribe proper. Of the vast hunting grounds once possessed by the Delawares, there is now remaining only two hundred acres for each man, woman and child of the nation. Our route lay through a dense forest the chief part of the dis-

tance, of which the black-walnut, the oak, the sycamore, and cotton-wood were the chief varieties of trees growing. The black walnut frequently attains a great size in Kansas, and is found in all parts of the Territory. When we separated, I slipped a four-bladed pocket-knife in his hand, as a parting present, with which he seemed greatly pleased. I shortly after arrived at the ferry, which is of rope construction, the current propelling the boat across the stream ; and hailing the idle Charon on the opposite shore, I was soon over, and treading the streets of Lawrence.



## CHAPTER III.

## L A W R E N C E .

“ 'Mid strife, tumult and danger,  
And half a nation's scorn ;  
Pride of our north-land freemen—  
O, Lawrence, thou wert born ! ” --ANONYMOUS.

WHERE the prairie first touches the south bank of the river, as you go up the winding Kaw, some forty miles from its mouth, stands the town of Lawrence. In a direct course four miles south of Lawrence, flows the Wakarusa, which empties into the Kansas river, six miles below the town. Immediately behind Lawrence, about a half mile from the river, a bold hill, or prairie promontory, rises abruptly to an altitude of upwards of a hundred feet. This is the noted Mount Oread.

Lawrence was first settled in July, 1854, by a company of Eastern emigrants, about thirty in number, under the guidance of Charles Branscomb. In two or three weeks more, they were joined by a still larger company of emigrants under the command of

Dr. Charles Robinson. When the first company proceeded to lay out the sight for their town, they found that several Missourians laid claim to the spot. One of these had erected a small shanty of logs to hold his "claim," and was living in Missouri. The settlers finally succeeded in buying out all who appeared to have any feasible claim to the site of their town. Such was the commencement of Lawrence! And when one takes into consideration the difficulties its citizens have had to surmount, the hardships they have undergone, the sieges and pillages to which they have been time and again subjected; the reflection must inevitably force itself on his mind, that it has been especially favored by Providence in its struggles for freedom, and for existence.

The present population of Lawrence is estimated at about three thousand. At that time it had two weekly papers, two banking establishments, five or six hotels, as many churches, a large number of stores, &c. The enterprising stage and hotel proprietors, the brothers Eldrige, were just completing their mammoth hotel, built on the site of the old Free State Hotel, that was sacked and destroyed the 21st of May, 1856. It is said to be the largest building west of St. Louis, and its entire cost to approximate seventy-five thousand. The Eldrige Brothers are men of great energy and enterprise, and have done more to build up the terri-



tory than any other men in it. Owing to the pressure of the "times" there was not so much doing in the way of improvements as at a similar period of the year previous.

The evening of my arrival I called on Wm. Phillips, the special correspondent of the New York *Tribune*, to whom I had a letter of introduction. He resides in a small cottage near the Kansas river, and just on the outskirts of the town. He was not at home, as I was in hopes he would have been. The disappointment was the keener as he had only left that morning, and if I had been one day sooner I might have had the pleasure of grasping the hand of one of Kansas' truest heroes. He had gone to the northern part of the territory on business connected with the approaching election, and would not return for several days.

His wife, a young and handsome woman, of apparently eight-and-twenty, received me very politely on learning the object of my visit, and during the agreeable hour I spent there, communicated to me much that was new and interesting concerning the past history of Lawrence. She is like her husband, enthusiastically "Free State" in politics, and her expressive eyes sparkled while she dwelt on the indignities which she and others had sustained from the hands of the border-ruffians, who were for a time the actual possessors of Lawrence. In answer to my

query whether she did not feel very uneasy during the frequent absences of her husband, known as he was all over the Territory, she made the heroic reply *that he was but doing his duty, and whatever his fate might be, it would be better than remaining ignobly at home when his country needed his services.* I thought of that beautiful poem of Mrs. Hemans, the “Switzer’s Wife,” commencing—

“The bright blood left the youthful mother’s cheek,” &c.

And reflected to myself that little danger existed of enslaving Kansas, while even the refined and delicate of her women exhibited such Spartan courage. The house was small, as I have stated, but the interior was neat and comfortable, and the paintings by some of the first masters, that decorated the walls, and the piles of books and papers laying around the room, betrayed the cultivated tastes of the “Tribune’s correspondent.”

The next morning I bent my pilgrim steps to Mt. Oread. The sun had been above the green slopes of the prairie long enough to dry the waving grass that covered the hill to its summit ; and an infinite variety of flowers and blossoms, indigenous to the prairie, gave color and richness to the plain and hill-side. I followed a winding path leading from the town to the summit, and in a few minutes was standing on the

crest of Mt. Oread. Seldom have I gazed on a fairer, or more glorious scene than the one presented. To the south and eastward was a perfectly level and beautiful plain, dotted over with farm-houses and cultivated fields to the dense belt of timber skirting the Wakarusa, and opening again with a similar landscape beyond, until a bold, high promontory, known as "Timber Mound," closed the eastward view. Westward towards Leocompton could be seen for miles and miles the winding Kaw ; while northward, miles away, upwards toward the May heaven from the wilderness of trees, rose the thin smoke from the village of the Delawares.

I seated myself on the shattered wall of the half-ruined Fort, to enjoy more fully the prospect, and muse at leisure over the eventful history of the town, whose busy streets lay stretched out below. The genius of the place exercised a strange influence on my mind. I saw no longer the smiling, fertile plain, or the thronged streets of the town ; but before me passed in long review the various scenes in the past stormy history of Lawrence. First came the settlement by the little band of emigrants ; weak in number, but strong in hope and purpose ; and the inglorious retreat of the first army of invasion that sought to crush out its youthful existence. Then passed before my gaze the hardships and sufferings of the devoted

settlers during the rigorous winter of '55 ; hemmed in by foes, and suffering for fuel and the most common necessities of life. I saw the illy-guarded and illy-fortified town, through whose streets and thoroughfares swept the bitter, searching wind of the prairies, chilling the hearts of the citizen-soldiery on duty, and whirling hither and thither the camp-fires and tents of the Missouri host in the bottom of the Wakarusa. Then followed the long, dim procession of events to the period of the final assault and sack of the town in '56 ; and the clan-like gathering of the border-ruffian hosts on Mt. Oread. Plainly before my eyes glided the various actors in the closing drama of the "Lawrence Tragedy," and so vividly was it all depicted : the march and attack of the ill-fated town ; the mobbing and destroying of the "press ;" the firing of Gov. Robinson's house and the Free State Hotel, and the indiscriminate pillage that followed ; that I involuntarily started as though expecting to behold the quiet, sylvan scene transformed by the genius of my musings into one of strife and warfare.

That evening I had an opportunity of beholding some of the prominent "Free State" men of Lawrence. An impromptu meeting was convened in front of the "Eastern House," and addressed by Conway, Thatcher, &c. M. F. Conway, or the "Young Man Eloquent," to use the sobriquet usually applied to him

in Lawrence, is a slender, scholarly-looking personage, of apparently two or three and thirty, with long-flowing hair, and light blue eyes. He is a pleasant, fluent speaker, rising at times to eloquence, and is very popular in Lawrence. Thatcher, one of the editors of the *Lawrence Republican*, is also of the "Young America" order, a graduate of one of the western colleges, and a staunch and thorough-going republican. His style of speaking is plain and destitute of verbage, but practical, forcible, and convincing. Gov. Robinson was not in town.

The next day I took a stage-coach ride up the Kaw to Lecompton and Topeka. They are both flourishing towns, but small compared with Lawrence. Topeka is about fifteen miles west of Lawrence, on the same side of the Kansas. The route lay for the most part through a fine country, and we passed many fields of wheat and oats, which promised a yield far in advance of the best lands of the north-west. Dotted the prairies in all directions was to be seen the rich and black soil turned over to receive in its bosom the season's crop. I spent several hours in rambling around Topeka, viewing its various objects of interest, and returned the evening of the same day to Lawrence.

The next day, Sabbath, did the citizens of Lawrence, by their universal observance of the "day of



rest," strikingly remind the sojourning traveler that they were the descendants of the stern and rigid Puritans. Not a sign of business was any where to be seen. No groups were on the corners of the streets. When the bells ceased ringing their morning chimes, all were gathered to the various houses of prayer. I passed into the street, and entered the first temple that arrested my attention. The church proved to be of the Methodist denomination. There was a sermon in the sweetly-sung words of the choir, and a sermon in the plain, unpremeditated words of the preacher, that dropped like "heavenly manna" on my troubled spirit; although in a strange church, and 'mid the followers of a strange creed, I worshipped that Sabbath morning.

In the afternoon a number of Delawares crossed the rope-ferry, and paraded the streets, clad in their forest finery. They preserved a decent respect for the day, and in the evening some of them attended the various churches of the place.

Late in the afternoon of the next day, there came into the town an old settler from Bourbon Co., who brought the most alarming intelligence of the state and condition of things in the southern part of the Territory. Two murders had been committed on the Osage river in Bourbon Co., a few days previous, by a roving band of guerillas, who at the time he left were in Fort Scott, abetted and harbored by its troops.

The news created considerable excitement in Lawrence, as the settler was known to be a reliable man, correct and truthful in his statements. I saw him shortly after his arrival, and had considerable conversation with him, which decided me in the intention I had previously half formed in my mind, of going south myself, and learning the truth or falseness of the thousand reports going the rounds of the "press," and generally known and spoken of as the "Fort Scott difficulties." I went that evening to the office of the "*Lawrence Republican*," with the editors of which I had some business, and to whom I communicated my recently formed design.

They highly approved of my intention, and I sat late that night in the "editors' sanctum" at Lawrence, gleaning all I could learn from conversation relative to the unsettled condition of the South, and poring over maps and papers of the Territory. I then went to the hotel where I was stopping and retired to rest, to be ready against the morning for a journey over the counties of Lykins and Lynn, and through the land of the Ottaways.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE JOURNEY SOUTH.

"I've wandered wide and wandered far,  
But never have I met,  
In all this lovely western land,  
A spot more lovely yet."—BRYANT.

THE morning of my departure from Lawrence, May 18th, the day set for the vote on the "Leavenworth Constitution;" the sun rose clear and brilliantly, bathing in a flood of glory the broad rolling prairies of contested Kansas. Early as it was in the day when I bade a regretful adieu to the city of Robinson and Lane; men of all races and climes, the hardy pioneers of Kansas, were pouring into Lawrence from the roads leading in all directions out into the Territory. The streets were thronged with wagons and passers; the stores were crowded with customers, and the whole city wore a look highly gratifying to all acquainted with her early stormy history. In the May sky, fair and lovely, loomed Mt. Oread, and the old stone Fort upon its summit, whose walls had bristled often with



the seried bayonet ; and whose very name is conjuror of a thousand historic recollections, seemed, as it reflected back the bright sunbeams, to rejoice in the sweet reign of peace.

I left Lawrence on foot, intending to continue my journey in that manner, until overtaken by the coach which was to leave Lawrence that morning for Osawattomie, distant some forty miles ; at which place I intended stopping for the night. A pleasant walk of less than an hour brought me to Blanton's Bridge, which spans the Wakarusa four miles south of Lawrence. It is a picturesque looking place, and in gazing on its quiet loveliness, the traveler can with difficulty realize how different it must all have appeared during the stirring scenes of the Wakarusa war. The bottom of the Wakarusa, on the Lawrence, or north side of the stream, is low and marshy, so much so that it is almost impassable for wagons at particular seasons of the year ; and the merchants and business men of Lawrence, in order to get the trade of the southern portion of the Territory, were agitating the formation of a company to construct a firm, durable road from the suburbs of the town to the edge of the Wakarusa.

The south bottom of the Wakarusa is narrow, and needs but a little piking to make a solid road to the higher prairie beyond. Some miles south of the Wakarusa is Hickory Point, a heavy body of timber

lying along the Santa Fe road. It is noted as being the place where the martyred Dow was shot in 1855, by Coleman. He was a Free-State man, peaceful in disposition, and was going to a black-smith shop to get some work done at the time of the terrible tragedy. He was entirely unarmed, and unsuspecting of an attack when he met Coleman, and that wretch after allowing him to get some twenty or thirty yards from him, fired, lodging the load of slugs and buck-shot, of a shot-gun, in the heart of the unhappy Dow.

About noon I arrived at Prairie City, a flourishing village sixteen miles south of Lawrence, where I took dinner. The land around Prairie City is of an excellent quality, and is mostly claimed and pre-empted. They were voting when I arrived. The most of the votes were for "Leavenworth," but owing to the absence of interest in the election, it was thought that the poll would be small. After dinner I resumed my journey, and an hour's moderate walking brought me to what is termed the "Eight-mile-prairie." Land around the Eight-mile-prairie, though chiefly taken up, is held at low rates, and I scarcely know a portion of the Territory that offers greater inducements to settlers.

The south road, though easily distinguishable for the most part, is not unfrequently crossed by trails, paths, &c., where the greatest caution and observation

is required to prevent getting astray from the right road. Towards sunset I arrived at Stanton, a small village some ten miles north of Osawattomie, having walked since morning some thirty miles ; the most of the route leading me through as lovely a country as ever gladdened the eyes of man. At Stanton I waited for the coach, which soon came lumbering along, and, clambering up on the seat with the driver, was in a few moments once more in motion. The road was good, and while the lights were yet twinkling like so many stars from the windows of the scattering houses constituting the village of Osawattomie, we drove up to the door of its one hospitable, Free-State Hotel.

The polls were closed, and the public room of the hotel was filled with talkative politicians, who were volubly going over the result of the election they had just passed through ; from which I learned as I confidently expected, that "Leavenworth" had received the almost unanimous vote of the freemen of Osawattomie. Supper was soon announced, and on entering the long dining-room, I found a meal served up in the true western style of lavish, luxurious hospitality. Meats of different kinds ; bread, hot and cold ; Indian cakes, sweet cakes, biscuits, stewed fruits, preserves, pies, &c. ; were piled in heterogeneous confusion on a rough, unclothed table, that fairly trembled with its weight. The guests at the well-filled board

were of a corresponding variety as regarded dress, business, &c. Stage-drivers, teamsters, express-agents, emigrants, runners for houses in Lawrence, &c., all met together on terms of the most perfect equality, and did ample justice to the numerous viands placed before them.

While at supper, I observed that a young man who sat opposite, occasionally glanced towards me in a manner that indicated my countenance was not unfamiliar to him. After we retired to the public room of the inn again, he approached me, and informed me his name, olden residence, &c. He was a journeyman printer ;—his name was E——. V—— ; he had served his apprenticeship in D——, Penn., where he had frequently seen me. He was at that time employed in the office of the "*Osawattomie Herald*." He had been absent from Pennsylvania two or three years, but he had not forgotten her fair valleys and towering mountains, and had a multitude of questions to ask me concerning the land of his birth. It was pleasant to meet an olden dweller of the vale of Penn., so far from home, and we sat by the open hearth-fire until late in the night, chatting about mutual friends, and the happy hours spent in by-gone times in the "land far-away."

The next morning, I took a stroll over the town previous to eating breakfast. It contained some fifty or

sixty houses, almost all of which have been erected since the sack of '56. It is located about fifty miles from the Missouri river, in Lykens Co., and the heart of a rich agricultural country. It was founded under the auspices of the "Emigrant Aid Society," and despite the drawbacks it has received from Missourian invasions, it bids fair to become one of the most important of the inland towns of the Territory. On the outskirts of the village is one of those invariable accompaniments of the "Yankee Town," viz :—a steam saw-mill. It was already in operation, manufacturing the huge logs into boards and scantling for the wants of the town, and surrounding country. Close to the mill is a giant sycamore, whose trunk is bristled over with long pegs, to the top of the tree. I was at a loss at first to know the object of the pins, but the idea soon flashed across my mind. It was a ladder leading to the top of the tree, and was used as a look-out station at times when danger threatened Osawattomie. I ascended the ladder to the top, and enjoyed from thence a splendid view.

Previous to arriving at Osawattomie, I had thought that owing to the unsettled state of things southward, I would take the stage-coach at Osawattomie ; but learning there would be no stage until the second morning after my arrival, and finding that things were tolerably quiet in a political way, I thought

I might venture to continue still further a mode of travel I had proved so agreeable. So ordering my luggage to be forwarded to me by stage to Sugar Mount, distant some thirty miles, at which place I intended to make my first stoppage, I turned my back on the hospitable town, and, while the free prairie breezes fanned my brow, commenced my journey along the lonely road leading to Fort Scott.

Lovely and more lovely grew the country as I advanced. As by magic the seemingly interminable prairie constantly developed some new beauty fair to the eye, without a repetition, and without a sameness. Flowers of all kinds and colors growing in prodigal luxuriance ; strawberries hanging temptingly from vines crimson with the luscious fruit, and beautiful blossoming trees and shrubbery, were fixed features in the great picture of loveliness ; around which clustered an ever-changing grouping of nature's rarest tints and colorings. It was a mild, soft spring day ; a day that disposes one more to revery than to action, and allows the softer part of his nature to gain the ascendancy. I threw myself upon the green grass, and abandoned my mind for a few moments to the luxury of meditation. How sad, thought I, that man, made in the image of his Maker, the noblest of all created things, should ruthlessly mar his fairest works ; making, for the paltriest objects, this earth a theatre



of strife and blood. Little did I think I was shortly to hear of an atrocious massacre, committed within a few miles of me at the very time of my musing, which in extent and fiendishness, surpassed anything hitherto recorded in the annals of ill-fated Kansas!—Yet such was the case!

I had wandered somewhat out of the right road in a south-east direction, and was just emerging from a strip of woodland that skirted a small stream of water, which a settler some distance back had informed me I must cross to gain the desired track, when I encountered a squad of armed horsemen. I did not see them until they were within a few yards of me, in consequence of the thickness of the timber, and then the speed at which they were riding would have rendered useless any attempt at escape if such had been my intention. The leader of the troop, a tall, dark-whiskered, and dark complexioned man, reining in his horse, rudely accosted me with:—

“Where did you come from?”

Judging from their looks, manners, &c., that they were Missourians, I thought I might as well be pretty guarded in my replies to their rude interrogations, and so, after pausing for a moment, I answered:—

“From the town of Lawrence.”

“D—— you, it takes you a long while to answer! Where are you going?”

The hot blood rushed to my face, but I felt the necessity of prudence, and as quietly as possible replied :

“ To the town of Paris.”

“ I guess he is all right,” said one of the ruffianly gang, “ none but *friends* live in Paris : let us over the border before the d—d abolitionists are in hot pursuit of our trail.”

“ Not so fast, Bill, you are always in a d—d hurry when you get a few yards into the 'Territory,” said another of the gang, “ I go in for having him searched ; who knows what he may have about him !”

To this procedure some assented, and some objected, and for a moment I feared my first adventure with the “ border-ruffians” was likely to result unpleasantly enough ; but for a reason I afterwards learned they were in a great haste, (2) which fact probably alone saved me from an examination, which, from the letters, &c., on my person must have inevitably resulted in making me appear an extremely *suspicious character* in the eyes of the *Missouri gentry*. I did not breathe freely, however, until they galloped on, which they did in a few minutes ; the whole interview, in fact, occupying less time than it takes to describe it, although the time seemed *long* during the few moments they were deciding on the adoption or rejection of that measure which if carried out, would in all probability have altered, or cut short my earthly career. My captors



were eight in number, and I marked their faces well. Two of them I saw several weeks afterwards at Fort Scott, and I recognized them at a glance. I watched them disappear in the distance, and proceeded onward in the direction of Paris.

The country was very sparsely settled, and it was some time before I met with any settlers, but when I did it was to learn that the Missourians had invaded the Territory, and were murdering all the Free State men they met in their progress. Although I did not credit one-half the extravagant accounts told me, I was satisfied that there was sufficient truth in them to cause me to be grateful to Divine Providence for the safe escape I had made from the clutches of the ruffians. On I pushed towards Paris, and just before approaching the town, I fell in with three or four Free State men, armed with muskets and rifles, bound for the town. They informed me that there had been a terrible massacre committed at the "Trading Post," a town seven or eight miles south of Paris, and that the settlers were collecting in Paris preparatory to marching to the scene of the massacre. While they were yet speaking, we approached an outpost of the mustered force ; it by this time being quite dark, and giving the "pass-word," we were soon walking among scores of Free State men, who at the first intelligence of "Missourian Invasion," had dropped their farming

implements, and snatching their trusty fire-arms, had hurried into Paris, eager to be led against the murderers of their neighbors.

Concerning the extent of the massacre committed, nothing really definite appeared to be known. Some said hundreds of Missourians were in the Territory, and that dozens of lives had been sacrificed ; while others more moderate, limited the invaders to forty or fifty, and the killed to six or seven. The "horse," commanded by Brig. Gen. Daniels and Col. Mitchel, left shortly after my arrival in the town, for the scene of the tragedy ; leaving word for the "foot" to remain in Paris until morning, unless ordered elsewhere in the interim. The number of men left to guard the town did not greatly exceed a score ; and it was interesting to observe the effect of the thousand extravagant rumors, that came in the little town with every fresh arrival, on the different members of the motley company collected. The town is built in the form of a square ; the scattering log and frame houses all looking on a large area, and in this grass-grown square, in front of the one hotel of the town, the little band of Free State men were collected in knots, listening to the accounts of those whose knowledge of the massacre seemed the most correct, and adding remarks parenthetically, as the narrative or their feelings dictated. There were a few among the number

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collected who betrayed fear at the recital of the fearful tragedy, and spoke of moving their families out of the Territory ; but the majority evidenced by their sternly-compressed lips, flashing eyes, and bold, outspoken condemnation of the high-handed outrage, that they would shed the last drop of their blood before submitting to border-ruffian tyranny.

The night grew chill as the time wore to midnight, and still no word came from the horsemen who left early in the evening. The general conviction was that they had found the " Trading Post " deserted by the Missourians, and had encamped there for the night, leaving further proceedings for the next morning. A good fire was blazing on the open hearth of the public room of the inn, and one by one the hardy settlers, wearied with the day's labors, stole in from the chilly night, and threw themselves on the hard floor, until the broad square was entirely deserted of its occupants. I had had as yet no supper, and the pangs of hunger growing almost intolerable, I went into the kitchen of the inn, where the family had domesticated themselves for the night, and communicated my wants to the kind landlord, who immediately supplied me with a small roll of bread and some cold meat, which appeased the most pressing wants of nature.

Before retiring to rest I paid a visit to the outposts, the sentinels of which were to be changed at regular

intervals throughout the night. Every thing was quiet on the lonely prairie. The sentinels paced each his measured round. Away up in the azure heaven twinkled the stars like so many angel-eyes looking down on the beauteous scene which the murderous hand of man had marred with his brother's innocent blood. I returned to the head-quarters, and following the example of the weary men around, threw myself on the folds of my blanket in a corner of the room, trusting to the sentries pacing in sleepless vigilance around young Paris, and to the God above, far, far more watchful than ever earthly sentinel, for protection.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE MARAIS DES CYGNES MASSACRE.

“ A blush as of roses,  
Where rose never grew !  
Great drops on the bunch-grass,  
But not of the dew !  
A taint in the sweet air  
For wild bees to shun !  
A stain that will never  
Bleach out in the sun ! ” — WHITTIER.

EARLY the next morning I succeeded in hiring a horse of a settler living near the town, and after eating a hurried breakfast, mounted my steed, and in company with three or four armed horsemen, started for the scene of the massacre. The route for the greater part of the distance lay through a low-bottom ground, densely covered with timber, of which the oak, maple, walnut, and sycamore, were the chief varieties. The foliage of the forest was frequently beautiful in the extreme. All the trees and saplings were either in flower or budding into new leaf, and the crimson clusters of the maple-blossoms, and the gorgeous

flowers of the wild-apple lined the way-side in prodigal profusion. My companions were quite talkative, compelling me frequently to join in their miscellaneous discourse. In about an hour from the time we started, we arrived at the ford of the Marais des Cygnes, whose swollen waters we crossed without much difficulty, and urging our jaded horses up the steep bank, we were in a few minutes in the ill-fated Trading Post.

The town was full of armed men, preparing to march on West Point, a noted border town in Missouri, and mingling in among them I soon learned the particulars of the horrible tragedy of the day previous, which (with the information I afterwards obtained from the survivors of the massacre, &c.,) I will now proceed to give the reader.

“Chotteau’s Trading Post” is situated on the military road leading from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Scott, on the south bank of the Marais des Cygnes, or Osage river, forty miles north of Fort Scott, and three or four miles from the Missouri line. It is an old place, having been established as a frontier post to trade with the Indians long before Kansas was organized as a Territory. The buildings are chiefly log—long, low, and ruinous. The inhabitants, though generally Free State in theory, or politics, were primitive in character and habit ; remarkably quiet and



inoffensive, and had taken no part in the troubles of the Territory. From the time of the earliest settlement on the Marais des Cygnes, however, the quiet, peaceable squatters had some neighbors who were a source of great annoyance to them, who kept stealing their horses, ordering them from their claims, &c.

One of the most dreaded of these men was the notorious Capt. Hamilton, who resided some three or four miles from the Trading Post, in a strongly fortified house of hewn logs. He came into the Territory in '55, from the State of Georgia, accompanied by two brothers of like character, and although from the first a violent Pro-Slavery man, and the owner of slaves, he succeeded by force of character and the aid of the pro-slavery element in the Territory, in getting elected to various offices of trust during the first year or two of his residence. As time rolled on and the prospects of enslaving Kansas grew daily more gloomy, his efforts to stay the failing fortunes of the slave-power in Kansas, increased to the phrenzied desperation of madness. The suavity and politeness of manners which he at first assumed in his intercourse with the settlers, as he saw his political power slipping hopelessly from his grasp, rapidly disappeared, and the *man* and the *border-ruffian* stood revealed in their true deformity. He gathered around him a number of the most blood-thirsty desperadoes that could be

procured in western Missouri, or of his "ilk" in the Territory ; converted his log-house into a fort with palisades, &c., and became at once the pest and terror of the surrounding country.

All last winter he carried on a systematic, predatory warfare, sallying out under the cover of night with his men, and lighting down on some lonely Free State settlement, where they would steal all the horses they could come across, and drive them into the palisades of Fort Hamilton, from whence—sold at a nominal price—they would find their way to Missouri and the East. Frequently during the winter he would come in contact with the surrounding settlers, to whom he was invariably arrogant and overbearing ; with one of them, a blacksmith, by the name of Snyder, he had a fierce discussion some time last April, and left him threatening his life. From that time Snyder kept a loaded gun constantly by him, expecting at any moment an attack. On various occasions, when meeting with his neighbors at the grocery of the town, or at other places, he threatened that he would have their *scalps* whenever he was compelled to leave Kansas with his slaves—that whenever it was definitely known that the Lecompton Constitution had passed Congress, there would be bloody work in the Territory. All who did not go in for it would be massacred or driven from Kansas, &c.



After the passage of the Lecompton Constitution in some shape was regarded as certain at Washington, and intelligence to that effect had been received in western Missouri, Hamilton spent a great portion of his time in West Point and the border counties of Missouri, assisting to revive the secret societies that had gone down since '56, and making arrangements with leading citizens of Missouri for a general guerrilla warfare on the settlers of Kansas.

Early in May he made a foray on the Free State settlements on the Osage river, stealing a number of horses and committing other depredations. The long-suffering and long-enduring settlers could put up with these raids and unprovoked outrages no longer. They arose en masse and ordered him in a given time to leave the Territory. He took his departure within the specified period, but was frequently in the neighborhood of the Post afterwards, spying around under the cover of the night, and holding secret conclaves in his abandoned fortress. The settlers of the Marais des Cygnes, mindful of his maledictions uttered during the spring and winter, kept up a guard for some time, but as no attack was made, they soon grew unsuspicious of danger, and suffered the little force to disband and leave their midst. Misplaced was their confidence! Fatal the error committed!

On the 19th of May, the day before my arrival at

the Trading Post, there was a meeting of the leaders of the pro-slavery party at the house of Thomas Jackson, a noted resident of Missouri ; at which there were numerous delegates from both Missouri and Kansas. A warm discussion ensued as to the best policy to adopt in their future invasions of the Territory. Some were in favor of stealing from and harassing the settlers until they would become wearied out, and for the sake of peace flee the Territory ; while others of the genuine "*border-ruffian*" order, advocated as strongly an indiscriminate slaughter of the "*abolitionists*," until the last of the Yankee race was exterminated.

Hamilton was in favor of the latter method, and in a set speech before the meeting he urged the policy of striking terror into the enemy by a well-directed blow on the Trading Post while it was unguarded, and its inhabitants were unsuspecting of an attack. If they were ever to commence (3) the system of guerrilla warfare, for which they had revived their secret orders, and by which, with the aid of the English Bill, they hoped to fulfill their long-desired object of securing Kansas to slavery, the proper time to inaugurate it was immediately. Every day they delayed rendered the task more and more herculean. Unless an excitement could be immediately engendered in the Territory that would stop all emigration and drive out the

timid of the settlers, *to talk about getting control of the polls in August, sufficiently to accomplish anything thereby*, was simply ridiculous. Their friends at Washington had labored hard to secure the passage of the English Bill, and expected the friends of "Lecompton" to do their duty, &c.

He wound up his remarks by calling on all who were for blood to follow him into the Territory. Twenty-five men obeyed the summons of the guerrilla chieftain. The names of some of the more prominent of the company were, viz:—Charles A. Hamilton, captain, Dr. John Hamilton, Alvin Hamilton, brothers, Luke Yealock, William Yealock, Thomas Jackson, Brocket, Harlin, Beach, Mattock, &c., &c. Eight of the twenty-five resided in Kansas and seventeen in Missouri. Those from Kansas chiefly resided in or near Fort Scott, and those from Missouri were principally citizens in or residents near West Point. This place was the "Border Ruffian" head-quarters in '56, having a blue-lodge at that time, and being the rendezvous of Gen. Clark and the southern army of invasion. It was also the seat of the "Council of Ten," who in secret chamber, with power as potent and irresponsible as that ever exercised by the Inquisition of Spain, or the secret tribunals of Westphalia, decided the fate of the prisoners taken during that gloomy year.

Hamilton and his guerrilla company immediately crossed the border, and pursuing a somewhat circuitous course, arrived at the Trading Post about one o'clock, p. m. It was a beautiful day, and the quiet that reigned around the secluded village, broken only by the light laugh of maidens, or the sounds of workmen, might well have moved a murderer's heart to pity ; but it had no effect on the soulless ruffians who meditated the destruction of its inhabitants. They were not perceived until they emerged from the timber, and rode up to the grocery of the village. As the surrounding country was perfectly quiet, and the villagers, unsuspecting of an attack, were all engaged at their various avocations, no resistance could be offered, and none was attempted. At the store they took the clerk, John F. Campbell, and G. W. Andrews, prisoners. So unsuspecting of danger was young Campbell, that when he saw them approaching the store he supposed them to be friends, and with the friendliness habitual to him, stepped frankly out to bid them welcome. He was instantly made a prisoner, and the store filled by the ruffians, who commenced a sack of its contents, appropriating to themselves whatever pleased their fancy.

While thus engaged, a William Stillwell, of Sugar Mound, a place some ten or twelve miles distant from the Post, came into the village in a two-horse wagon,

on his road to Kansas City. They surrounded him, asked him a few questions, and finding that he was from Sugar Mound, the residence of the noted Capt. Montgomery, they immediately made him a prisoner. They then scattered around the place, picking up all the Free State men they could seize in their search. After collecting all the prisoners together, they ordered them into the wagon of the captured Stillwell, and started in their retreat to the border. They had proceeded about a half-mile when they encountered a missionary by the name of Rev. Charles Reed, whom they ordered into the wagon, dismissing Andrews, from some unexplained causes. They then proceeded onward some two or three miles when they halted. They had by this time taken twelve prisoners.

These men had all been captured while engaged at their peaceful avocations without resistance and unarmed, and had never been implicated in any of the troubles in Kansas. They were all strictly conservative men.

In the interim, Hamilton had dispatched his Lieut. Brocket, with a small detachment of men, to capture the blacksmith Snyder, of whom mention was made in the early part of this chapter. He was at work in his shop with arms bared to the shoulder, when the ruffians rode up to the open door, and one of them with an oath exclaimed :—

“Ha, Snyder, we have got you just where we want you !”

“Have you !” said the hero, snatching up his double-barreled shot-gun that stood by his side, and firing the contents of one of its barrels into his assailants, slightly wounding Brocket and killing the horse under him. Then aiming the other barrel at the cowardly gang, which was thrown into confusion by the fall of their leader, he commenced his retreat along a stone wall, and almost incredible as it is, made his escape.

Stung by this unexpected failure of a portion of his fell designs, Hamilton determined to wreak immediate vengeance on the inoffensive men he had captured.

They had halted close to a deep ravine in a skirt of timber near Fort Hamilton. The prisoners were taken from the wagon, and ordered to form in a line five yards from the ruffians, who seated on their horses on the brow of the ravine, with their guns pointed downwards, almost touching the breasts of their victims, waited but the word of command to speed the swift messengers of death which would send them to their final audit. How solemnly awful must have been their feelings to know that the next moment they must stand before their Maker, without even time to breathe a prayer for their souls' salvation, I will leave the reader to judge.



But fair as must have looked the May sun-beams streaming in the narrow ravine on which their eyes were to rest never more, and yearningly and tenderly as their last thoughts must have wandered to the loved ones of home, not a prayer or petition rose to the lips of one of the heroic twelve for mercy—for life from the hands of their cruel, blood-thirsty captors. They knew that suing to such men would be—

“As the bleating  
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry  
Of seamen to the surge”——

And so—

“With a vain plea for mercy  
No stout knee was crooked ;  
In the mouths of the rifles  
Right manly they looked.”

Never, never, outside of Kansas, was truer, or more undaunted heroism exhibited ! Search the annals of the world's history, from the fabled records of antiquity to the present time, O, scholar ! and show me, if you can, a spectacle wherein *martyrdom for a principle* is more gloriously exhibited than in the massacre of the Marias des Cygnes ?

The command was given to “Present Arms ! Fire !” and a score of guns (the demon Hamilton himself setting the example,) dislodged their contents of buck-shot and ball in that line of doomed men. Every man dropped to the earth. Five were killed instantly !

All but one of the others were badly wounded. He fell from prudential reasons, and being covered with blood from his murdered and wounded companions, fortunately escaped unhurt.

“Be sure that all are dead,” said the ruffian Hamilton—“dead men tell no tales!”

Then commenced a scene I sicken to relate. If there is a reader of these pages who think my language towards the border-ruffians is harsh and uncalled for, let him look on the scene, and deny if he can that the term “ruffian” is deserved.

They dismounted from their horses, kicked the men, and rolled their bodies, weltering in blood, over and over to see if they were dead. Finding one only slightly wounded, Hamilton placed his revolver to his ear, and fired, remarking as he did so that he had always found that the most certain shot he could make. Those who were wounded had presence of mind to conceal their pain, suspend breathing, &c., and thus escaped. Pockets were searched for money, and all that was of any value taken. The key to the safe of the store was taken out of young Campbell’s pocket by one of the ruffians, who said there was money in that safe, and he would come some night and get it. Stillwell, one of the victims, had a large sum of money, which he secreted in the straw of the wagon, where it remained undiscovered by the ruffians. After committing



these and numerous other outrages, the ruffians mounted their horses and galloped off. The names of the killed were : Wm. Stillwell of Sugar Mound, recently from the State of Indiana. He was a young man, not over twenty-eight, and had a young and beautiful wife, and two small children. When he left home the morning of the massacre, his wife, with a presentiment of evil on her mind, urged him to take the Territorial road to Kansas City, via Osawattomie. He assured her that there was no danger in taking the most direct road—that he was known as a peace man, and would not be molested. He was killed with a double-barreled shot-gun, loaded with pistol balls, the charge entering his left breast. He was a “Free-Mason,” and it was said that a Free Mason, Dr. Hamilton, of Fort Scott, shot him. He was highly esteemed by all that knew him.

Patrick Ross was an Irishman, who had been driven from his claim on the Little Osage, by the same band of ruffians.

Mr. Colpetzer was a farmer from Pennsylvania. He was a quiet, peaceable man—a fair type of that class of sturdy settlers who, snugly nestled among the green hills and valleys of the land of Penn, have by generations of thrift and industry, made her character for sobriety and good will proverbial to the world. He left a wife and family.

Michael Robinson was a farmer from Iowa. He was a good citizen, and universally respected.

John F. Campbell, the store keeper, was from Pennsylvania. He was of a remarkably social disposition, and had endeared himself to all who knew him. He was quite young and had never been married.

The wounded were Wm. Hairgrove, Asa Hairgrove, Charles Reed, Amos Hall, and Charles Snyder.

Wm. Hairgrove and Asa Hairgrove are brothers, originally from Georgia, who came to Kansas to live in a Free State. This is the head and front of their offending. The Rev. Charles Reed is a Baptist clergyman from Wisconsin, who moved into the neighborhood of the Post the week previous to the tragedy. He had denounced the course of the border-ruffians in public, and hence, the hatred of Hamilton. Amos Hall was a settler, a neighbor of Hamilton's. He had never borne arms. Charles Snyder, the blacksmith, was shot in the leg and back. He carried several buck-shot in his leg all summer.

The dead had been brought to the village before our arrival, and placed in one of the houses. Some of the seriously wounded were there also ; among them "Preacher Reed," as he was familiarly termed, who had crawled off into the woods after he was shot, and was not found until the morning following, when he was discovered by his faithful wife, who had searched

for him all night, and who had him conveyed to the town, where his wounds, which were dangerous, could be dressed and attended to.

I went into the house of death. It was not a morbid curiosity that impelled me to the spot, but an irrepressible desire to satisfy myself if the accounts I had heard of the manner of their deaths were correct in every particular as stated. When I first heard the awful narration it seemed to me impossible that twelve men, taken indiscriminately from the farm, the building, and the roadside, should have acted in a manner so truly heroic—I thought there must have been some instinctive tremor—some shrinking of the body from the foe—from death ;—and of this I wished to satisfy myself.

I entered the silent room. On a rude bier lay the Kansas martyrs—Colpetzer—Campbell—and Stillwell ! The last kind offices were being performed for the dead previous to their interment, and their mangled corpses were clearly exposed to view. . . . . It was as stated !—All had received the fire in the front. Not a scar disfigured the back of one of the untimely dead, but O ! where once beat the gallant hearts, thick, thick, as the drops of a summer shower, had dashed the leaden hail of death.

On the cold, pallid lips of the martyred Stillwell there rested a faint smile, as though of wife and

Heaven were his last thoughts on earth. Over the fair, young face of Campbell, and on the seamed features of Colpetzer slept a holy repose, and scarred and mangled as were their lifeless forms, it seemed as though their spirits in the closing of life had been lifted above feelings of corporal pain, so beautifully tranquil were the faces of the dead.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE MARCH ON WEST POINT.

"They left the ploughshare in the mould,  
Their flocks and herds without a fold,  
The sickle in the unshorn grain,  
The corn half-garnered on the plain,  
And mustered in their simple dress  
For wrongs to seek a stern redress.  
To right those wrongs, come weal, come woe,  
To perish, or o'ercome their foe."—McLELLAN.

THE intelligence of the horrible massacre narrated in the last chapter, spread like wild-fire over the country, and by the time the arrangements were finally completed for a march on West Point, where it was supposed some of the murderers were harboring, nearly two hundred men had collected in the little town from various parts of the Territory. Some of the number were unarmed, old men who had come to give their patriarchal counsel to those younger who could bear arms; and some were settlers originally from Missouri and States further South, pro-slavery in politics, who had been attracted to the spot simply from

curiosity to see the murdered men, and learn what was to be done towards arresting their assassins. The greater part of those collected, however, were enthusiastically Free State, and men sternly resolved that no future exertions on their part should be wanting to bring to justice the guilty murderers.

All the time that active preparations were going forward for a march on West Point, scouts were continually arriving from various places along the border, and communicating the result of their observations to the eager-listening crowd assembled. The tenor of their communications all went to confirm the general impression that Hamilton and some of his ruffians were harboring in West Point, and the universal sentiment was for marching on the place and securing their arrest—peaceably if possible—but forcibly if reduced to the alternative. One scout, who had been nearly to West Point, brought intelligence that the town appeared to be full of armed men, and that the trail of Hamilton's party, although diverging in various directions after getting a few miles out on the prairie, bore mainly in the direction of West Point. As this scout was one of Capt. Montgomery's men, and bore moreover the reputation of being one of the best trail-hunters in the Territory, his report was received with due consideration, and although the accompanying announcement of armed force in West



Point blanched the cheeks of some of the more timid of the listeners, it appeared to have no other effect on the majority than to stimulate them to still more strenuous exertions to expedite their departure.

The two great obstacles in the way had been arms and horses, to fit and mount the men. But few of the noted Sharpe's rifles were in the southern region of the Territory ; the chief weapons were the common shot or sporting guns, and not half of the men were provided with those. Runners had been sent to Osawattomie and Lawrence, begging for aid and arms ; but it would be several days before either could arrive where needed, and in the interim, necessity, that "mother to invention," was busy in supplying the wants of arms and a regular organization. Old muskets that had slept harmless since the days of '56, and whose long rusted locks and disused tubes looked as though in discharge they would be as likely to injure friend as foe, were brought into requisition ; and anything in the animal line, whether horse, mule, or pony, was surreptitiously seized and pressed into service.

The sun was high in the heaven when we rode out of the town, and struck the traveled road leading to West Point. The company numbered some sixty or seventy in all, and was commanded by Gen. Mc Daniels and Col. R. B. Mitchell. Capt. Montgomery, though in the company, and forming with his men



(some twelve or fifteen in number,) the solid strength of the expedition as regarded equipments and actual reliability in case of danger, declined to take any part in the command of the men, leaving it all to the regular officers under the militia laws of the Territory.

During the ride I sought the side of the scout who brought the intelligence of the armed force in West Point, and communicated to him my adventure with the border-ruffians the day previous, describing to him as faithfully as possible the appearance of the surrounding country, the conversation that ensued, &c. He made me repeat some of the description several times, and after studying for some moments, he recalled to mind the spot where the interview occurred, and after settling that point definitely by a few questions, he said he had no doubt whatever but what the armed men I met were the ruffians of Hamilton, who from some motive had left the main company and taken that route out of the Territory.

The distance from the Trading Post to West Point is about ten miles. There had been a few scattering settlements along the road at some time previous, but the growing difficulties in the Territory had caused the settlers to abandon the frontier, and the route was lone and solitary. It caused sad feelings in the mind to see the deserted farm-houses, with the cattle rioting on the luxuriant crops of grain, and the poultry

scratching in vain around the yawning and broken-down doors of the abandoned habitations for a morsel of food. In our journey we passed over a dozen neglected farms, where oxen and cows were grazing, and swine and poultry feeding, without seeing a single person to have charge of them. Every where in our ride to the frontier—

“Black melancholy sat, and around her threw  
A death-like silence and a dread repose.”

Yet the country itself was one of unsurpassed loveliness and natural fertility of soil, and needed but peace and the unmolested labors of the husbandman, to make the undulating, wide-spread prairie “blossom as the rose.”

Late in the afternoon the expedition arrived in sight of West Point, and a momentary halt was ordered while the officers held a “council of deliberation.” In this “council” Capt. Montgomery, and a number of the leading citizens of the Territory, participated. Some were in favor of immediately surrounding the town, and then, acquainting the civil authorities with the object of the visit, make a thorough search for the assassins implicated in the massacre of the *Marais des Cygnes* by the survivors of the tragedy. Others belonging to the conservative portion thought that such a procedure would give offence to the citizens of West Point, and urged the policy of first sending a deputa-

tion from their number to acquaint the authorities with the object of the visit, and then proceed in the search afterwards. The views of Capt. Montgomery when called for were briefly given.

“Gentlemen,” said he, “unless you wish to make this day’s work a mere farce, and ourselves the laughing stock of the Missourians, on and surround the town ; then after having done that, not partially, but thoroughly and completely, acquaint the authorities with your purpose ; tell them that you mean them no harm or disrespect, but you must see the face of every man in West Point, to see if the face of a murderer is there ; and to assure yourselves of the fact that all are shown, you yourselves must conduct the search,” &c., &c.

I do not wish to impeach the characters of the commanders of that West Point expedition. I believe they were men who had the welfare of Kansas at heart ; but they were unfitted by nature to hold the responsible position they then occupied, and in following their prudent, timorous feelings in opposition to the counsel of the experienced Montgomery, a grave and serious blunder was committed.

The deputation was sent. The council had arrested the notice of the dwellers of West Point, and the deputation confirmed the suspicions awakened by the armed array drawn out on the prairie. The word ran

swiftly from mouth to mouth over the town, and long before the tardy deputation returned, to our mortification we saw the very desperadoes in all probability for whom we crossed the border, break from the town and dart across the prairie in an eastward direction. There were mutterings of dissatisfaction among the men, particularly with the little band of Montgomery that were only restrained in due bounds by the stern control exercised over them by their chieftain ; and when at last the tardy "forward" was given, breaking through all restraint, they left the ranks, and like hounds released from the leash, scoured the prairie in pursuit of the fugitives.

How many made their escape on that occasion from West Point will never be known, but certain it is that when the company entered the town, where they were received with great politeness by the citizens, not a man concerned in the massacre of the previous day, although known to be living in West Point, could be found in or around the town.

Soon in came the band of Montgomery who brought as the result of their steeple-chase over the prairie, an odd-looking, diminutive man as prisoner, whose goggle, gray eyes seemed fairly starting from their sockets with fright. He proved to be a brother to one of the murderers, and after a short examination, was released from custody. His captors seemed quite unwilling for

him to escape, as from his great exertions to get off, they had conceived the idea he was one of the murderers; but when his "alibi" was clearly proven, they freely gave him up; the one having him in charge saying that if he had known he was running from mere fright, he would not have blowed his "Betsey" as he had.

The expedition remained some time in West Point, during which period I had ample opportunity to observe the town. I am sorry I cannot say much in favor of West Point. With all due deference to the position it occupies with Missouri and the *great Southern half of the Union*, truth compels me to state that the two most important characteristics of the place are, viz., its rum-shops, and the rum-bloated faces one meets with in traversing its streets. I have seen some western towns that I had thought previous to visiting West Point, were about the "ne plus ultra" in that direction, but I was mistaken. Nothing that I had ever beheld would equal West Point. It has been my fortune to tread its streets on several different occasions, and it always wore the same aspect. The town is small, not containing over two or three hundred inhabitants. The buildings are chiefly log, and although some of them are of considerable size, there is scarcely a decent appearing structure in the town. It is located near the State line, on a high prairie mound or



promontory, from which, of a clear day, you can see miles and miles into the Territory.

It was nearly nightfall when we left the town, and darkness set in before proceeding far on our homeward journey. It was my first day in the saddle for some time, and I was excessively wearied with the long ride I had undergone, but I did not dare to indulge myself with a moment's forgetfulness, as the way was rough, and in the pitchy darkness of the moonless, starless night, the utmost caution was required to guide my horse over the various obstacles that made our progress slow and tedious. Late in the night we arrived at the Trading Post where the greater part of the men remained until the next morning. There were no accommodations for such a company in the little village, and after lariatting out our horses, and putting out a strong guard, we carried some straw into a deserted house close to the river, and deposited ourselves in tiers thereon for the night.

The wearied out men around me soon gave evidence by their sonorous breathing that they were safe, clasped in the arms of the drowsy "god," but it was long before slumber visited my eyelids. The stirring events of the day, the forms of the martyred men on which I gazed in the morning, all rose in review before me, and resolve as I would to banish them from my mind—

•

“ Thoughts on thoughts a countless throng,  
Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along.”

until wearied out nature at last obtained the mastery,  
and I slept until morning.



## CHAPTER VII.

## THE BURIAL OF STILLWELL.

“Wind slow from the Swan’s Marsh,  
O dreary death train,  
With pressed lips as bloodless  
As lips of the slain!—  
Kiss down the young eyelids,  
Smooth down the gray hairs,  
Let tears quench the curses  
That burn through your prayers.”—WHITTIER.

THE next morning a council of the leading settlers was held in the little town, and regular arrangements made for their future protection. A strong volunteer force was to remain in, or near the Post until the succeeding Monday, when they were to be relieved by other settlers who would take their places in guarding the line. These arrangements satisfactorily perfected, the settlers began to disperse in various directions towards their distant homes. Wishing to ascertain if any of my relatives living at Sugar Mound had returned from their visit east, I concluded I would take advantage of some settlers starting to their homes in that neighborhood, and have some company in the

journey. We set out about 10 o'clock, a. m., and arrived at our destination early in the afternoon.

Our route for the first two or three miles lay along the bottom of the Marias des Cygnes, which was densely wooded with walnut, oak, sycamore, maple, &c. We crossed the lower ford of the stream, swimming our horses over the swift current, it having rained considerably during the night, and previous to our departure. One young man mounted on an Indian pony was borne some distance down the foaming stream, and narrowly escaped losing his life. After crossing the ford, and journeying along the banks of the stream for about a mile, we turned westward and ascended the high prairie. The country passed through was one of great beauty, but owing to its contiguity to the border was but thinly settled.

After proceeding some five or six miles we came in sight of Sugar Mound, a place long noted in Kansas history. It is a bold, high elevation, rising to the altitude of upwards of a hundred feet above the surrounding prairie, and densely covered with timber. It derives its name from Sugar Creek, which flows a short distance from its base. It was early settled by the Free-State men, and was the theatre of one of Gen. Clark's ruthless forays in '56. He murdered two or three of the settlers, burned and pillaged several stores and dwellings, and took a great number of pris-

oners. Clark at that time had three hundred men under his command.

Just before arriving at the Mound we came in sight of the prairie home of Stillwell, one of the murdered men at the massacre of Marias des Cygnes. He had been brought home for interment. There were two or three rude wagons around the house of mourning, brought by kindly sympathising friends to convey the relatives of the deceased and the corpse to its last resting place. The dwelling was a rude log structure, but the enclosed yard, the neatly kept garden, and the general air of thrift and neatness around, all told that the Eden-bliss of a happy home was destroyed forever more.

On arriving at the grocery at the Mound we found quite a number of settlers collected, awaiting the arrival of the funeral cortege to proceed to the place of interment. The intelligence of his sad fate had created a great excitement wherever circulated, as he was widely known and universally respected ; and the hardy settlers far and near had congregated together, to testify their sense of his worth by paying the last marks of respect to the untimely dead. Feeling but little interest in the stranger faces around me, and learning that my relatives had not yet returned to Sugar Mound, I bent my steps to the place of burial where some workmen were rudely fashioning the hastily dug grave.

The spot selected was a beautiful wooded knoll on the south bank of Sugar Creek, where a few scattering mounds gave evidence that the place had been used as a burial-ground by the early inhabitants.— Soon the funeral cortege made its appearance winding across the distant prairies, and the collected settlers forming two by two, with their arms to their shoulders, took up the line of march with slow and measured step to the place of interment. Arriving there they formed in lines, and with decent demeanor, and amid the most profound stillness, awaiting the arrival of the funeral train.

In a few minutes the death-procession halted in front of the grave, and the untimely bereaved widow and her two infant children were assisted to alight and conducted by some kind neighboring women to some rude seats constructed for the accommodation of the mourners. She wore a thick veil which prevented her features from being seen, but the convulsive sobs that momentarily shook her frame, gave unmistakable tokens of the almost insupportable anguish of her mind under her sudden and terrible bereavement.— The children, too, as though sensible of a father's loss, or from sympathy with their mother's uncontrollable sorrow, sobbed as though their little hearts would break. A kind friend, who was intimate with her and who was acquainted with what little was known

concerning the last moments of her husband, sat down by her side to pour the balm of consolation on her deep-laid sorrow, but vain was his well-meant sympathy. It only opened afresh the flood-gates of her lacerated feelings, and ever and anon, during the sad recital which he endeavored to soften as much as possible, she would hysterically murmur :—

“O, if he had only left some message for me, it would not have been quite so dreadful !—O, if he had only left some message of his wishes !”

The rude coffin was taken from the wagon, and borne by stout men to its final place of rest. It was carefully lowered to the bottom of the grave, and then the bearers stepped back to allow the stricken, heart-broken mourner a last lingering look at the receptacle containing all that was most cherished in life. She swept aside the thick folds of her veil, revealing as she gazed down into the narrow depths where her fondest hopes were soon to be buried forever, a face whose transcendent loveliness was visible even through the abandonment of sorrow that was fast sapping the foundation of life. One moment she gazed thus, while over her mind swept the full recollection of the recent terrible past, and a sense of the blasted, joyless future before her, and then reeling backwards would have fallen, had not one of the women caught her, and assisted by others, conducted her to her former seat.



When she revived and was sensible of what was transpiring around her, an old man (4) with hair as white as snow, stepped a few paces forward, and said he craved the privilege of saying a few words on the solemn occasion which had called them together. A stillness to oppression reigned over the place of death, as the old man with a clear, deliberate voice commenced :—

“ My friends ! I am, as you know, no speaker, but in the absence of a minister I have felt it my duty to say a few words. To-day we have assembled to bury our poor murdered brother Stillwell, and to-morrow a different duty lies before us. He was basely, cruelly murdered in cold blood, without cause or provocation, and we must avenge his death on the cruel, bloody murderers. Our brother’s innocent blood, until this is done, will cry to us from the ground. It is written in the Holy Book that ‘ whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed ;’ that ‘ as a man sows, so shall he surely reap,’ and ‘ as he metes, so shall it be meted unto him again.’ We can testify our love and respect for our butchered brother, and our sympathy for his lonely, disconsolate widow and orphaned children, in no better manner than by determined and persistents effort to bring to punishment his guilty murderers. Every thing incites us to such a course. Duty to God, the highest of all duties, demands it !

The innocent blood of our murdered neighbors demands it ! Personal safety—the welfare of ourselves, our wives, and our children, demand that we should be up and doing ! My friends ! I am an old man. I am fast hastening to the grave. I would say nothing at any time—least of all on such an awful occasion as this—that I did not at heart believe, and I believe that in our exertions to feret out and bring to justice the murderers of our dear, lifeless brother and his slain companions, the ‘God of battles’ will smooth the difficulties of the way, and preserve us from harm—amen !”

The effect produced by the earnest eloquence of the old man was almost indescribable. I have been in many an eastern grave-yard, when the power and eloquence of the learned and classical preacher seemed to sway at will the feelings of those congregated over the fresh-made grave of some loved one departed, but I never saw such an exhibition of emotion as that awakened by the few unpremeditated words spoken over the grave of the martyred Stillwell.

It was not the outward exhibition of grief that so strikingly manifested itself, but that deep, inward fount of sorrow so rarely touched in those unconnected with the departed, was moved to its utmost depths in the hearts of all assembled, and the strong man was for a moment as weak and powerless as the child who needs its mother’s hand to guide its steps.



When the emotion had somewhat subsided, the bearers once more approached the grave ; some straw was scattered on the rude coffin, and the final filling in of the earth followed. Soon all was completed, and the mourning widow and sympathizing friends alike moved slowly away. And so all was over ! Another victim of the Moloch, Slavery, had been removed from the sight of men, and the thunders of Him who has said, “ Vengeance is mine, and I will repay,” were still sleeping.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## FORT HAMILTON..•

"The terror of the country 'round  
Has fled his robber-hold,  
And in his log-built fortress now  
Are none but freemen bold."—BORDER SONG.

I WILL pass briefly over the two days that succeeded the events narrated in the last chapter, during which period I remained in the vicinity of Sugar Mound, doing little of moment except taking my turn at nights in standing guard over the place, which, from its contiguity to the border, and the known character of its inhabitants, had been threatened at various times by the Missourians.

The morning of the 24th of May there was a muster of the Sugar Mound guards in front of the little grocery of the place, previous to marching to the frontier to relieve the company left at the Post at the time of our departure. Not more than a score collected in consequence of a number having gone with Capt. Montgomery down to the neighborhood of Fort Scott,

where he had been sent for by the settlers of the Osage and Marmaton rivers, to protect them from the depredations of the guerrillas of the Fort and bordering counties of Missouri, which had grown into being almost a nightly occurrence. The time set for the departure of the company was ten o'clock, a. m., but the men were tardy in getting together, and the sun had nearly approached its meridian, when Capt. Weaver abandoning the idea of increasing further his number, took his place at the head of his little force, and in double file we wound along the base of Sugar Mound on our route to the Free State camp on the Marais des Cygnes. The day was gloomy, and a chill East wind blew against our faces, accompanied at times by a fine mist, which rendered the ride unpleasant compared with some I had taken previously. On arriving at the ford of the stream, we found its waters had greatly subsided, and we crossed over without any difficulty.

The report of the company left to guard the line was not very important in character, except that portion of it which confirmed the existence of a number of companies of armed men along the Missouri side of the line, with whose scouts and outposts, several skirmishes of a trifling character had taken place.

After our arrival at the Post, the men hitherto on duty were released from further service, and in a short

time the most of them took their departure for their distant homes. A few, however, who were young men, without any families, at the urgent solicitations of Capt. Weaver, and those with whom they were acquainted, consented to remain, and were valuable auxiliaries throughout our stay on the frontier. During the afternoon considerable scouting was done by our men, which strongly confirmed the report made us, that the enemy were in considerable force just over the line, and a while before evening we left the little village, and took up our march for Fort Hamilton, where we quartered ourselves for the night. The little force under Capt. Weaver did not exceed thirty men all told, but they were well armed, generally speaking, and in the secure fortress they had thrown themselves, would have proven a formidable adversary to almost any foe that might have sought to dislodge them from their position.

The night was dark and gloomy, but there was no gloom or darkness inside of Fort Hamilton. After strong guards had been out on all the roads and passes leading into the Territory, and every precaution taken to guard against a sudden surprise from the enemy, the residue of the little company immediately gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the moment. A huge fire blazed and crackled on the wide, open hearth ; lights were hung from the beams and rafters, and an

air of genial warmth and comfort pervaded the whole apartment. Each of the company had brought rations for several days with him, and the long board was covered with ample cheer, to which the hungry men were doing full justice, while many a joke and humorous tale went circling round, that caused the bursts of hearty laughter elicited to be echoed back from the huge beams and smoke-covered rafters of the olden stronghold of the robber Hamilton.

“What would the grim chieftain think,” said one of the company, a fine-looking youth of some three-and-twenty summers, who appeared to be a general favorite with all assembled, “if he could only look in a moment on this cool appropriation of his den, so long the rendezvous of a gentry of a different description, to such uses as it is appropriated to this evening? I ween the blood of the old tiger would full soon be even more ireful than it was when he so unceremoniously ordered Dick Northup from this very room one Sunday evening last winter.”

“Why, how was that, Ed?” said half a score of voices, “tell the story!” And solicited by the whole company, all of whom professed to be ignorant of the occurrence, the young man, nothing loath, commenced the following narrative.

“Why, you see old Hamilton has an only daughter, who is as fair as he is ugly, and as good as he is vil-



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lainless ; and who is moreover highly intelligent and accomplished, having received a splendid education previous to accompanying her father to Kansas. While living here in Kansas he was very choice of her, scarcely allowing her to stir out for fear, I suppose, she would become contaminated by associating with the Yankee settlers, and the poor girl must have led a lonely life enough of it, cooped up in this dismal Fort, with no companions but her father and his vile associates. But it so happened that some time last winter, Dick Northup—you all know what a fine, manly fellow Dick is, with hand as steady as ever drew a trigger—was out on a hunting expedition, and stopped at old Hamilton's to get a drink of the spring water, which you know is celebrated for its excellence. The old tiger was away from home, and Dick asked the young lady's permission to come in and rest himself for a few minutes, to which request she graciously acceded. It was not that Dick Northup was tired, for a more unwearying foot never pressed the prairies, as I who have hunted for days with him ought to know ; but he had heard the great beauty of old Hamilton's daughter so frequently spoken of, that he had a great desire to ascertain for himself the truth of the various rumors that had reached him. Well, to make a long story short, Dick was pleased with the young lady, and the young lady was pleased with Dick, and some how

after that day, no matter which way Dick started out after game, he was pretty sure to make Hamilton's rendezvous in his route before returning : keeping, however, at a safe distance if he saw any signs of the old bear about his den. One Sunday night Dick received intimation that the coast was clear, and started for an evening of enjoyment with the object of his affections, but as it is an old saying, ' that the course of true love never runs smooth,' so it was a true saying in this instance, for Dick had not much more than got comfortably seated by the side of the aforesaid lady, and was just commencing some of those little endearments so common to lovers, when the door suddenly opened, and the father, who was supposed to be in Missouri, entered the domicile. Dick, who doubtless devoutly wished the old gentleman in that place unmentionable to ears polite, arose to his feet, and in a somewhat confused manner, stammered something about its being a fine night, etc., etc. The first glance bestowed by the old tiger around the apartment, revealed to him the true state of things ; and stepping back to the door and opening it, he said in that cutting, sarcastic manner, which he could so well assume when he choose—' Yes, I think it is rather a fine night, suppose you walk out and try it.' There was no alternative for poor Dick, and gulping down the rising desire he felt to spring upon and throttle the



smiling old rascal, he bowed to the young lady and took his departure. She was soon after sent by old Hamilton to Missouri, and Dick, from the love he bears for Kansas, joined the little band of Montgomery shortly after her departure from the Territory. Comrades, this is about all of my story ; whether the lovers will ever meet again is more than I can tell, but this I know, that when Dick Northup hears of this last bloody raid of old Hamilton's, the love he bears the daughter will not screen the father from receiving the punishment his sins so justly demand should the fortunes of war ever place him in his power."

"Bravo, Ed ! Well told !" said one of his companions when he had finished the recital. "Why, where did you learn the trade of a novelist ? You have told the story with all the art of a Cooper ! But is it a fact or fiction, that's the question ?"

"Strictly true, on my honor," said the youth, "I have heard Dick go over it a score of times, and he is a person incapable of uttering a falsehood."

"Well," said another youth who had not yet spoken, "we have had a tale of love, and now for a change, let us have one of border-ruffian outrage, to make us patriotic in case we are attacked by the enemy before morning."

"Agreed, agreed !" was echoed by a score of voices, "let us have a story of border-ruffian outrage by all means !—but who will be narrator ?"

“I will be !” said a voice from a remote corner of the room, and the speaker, (5) a tall, slender man, with face on which the lines of care and suffering were strongly traced, strode forward and took a seat close to the group still assembled around the board on which had been spread the evening repast. He sat for a few moments with his head bowed upon his hands as though overcome by the recollections awakened in his mind, and then commenced :—

“Comrades, you have heard a story of the daughter !—I will tell you one of the father ! The daughter may be good and virtuous as he says, I know nothing about her save what I have heard this evening, but a blacker heart than that of old Hamilton’s there beats not on earth. Some of you know me !—know me as one of the men of Montgomery !—know me for my hostility to Capt. Hamilton !—but few, or none of you know the cause—the true cause of that implacable, deathless hatred. I had thought to carry my secrets with me to the grave, but since this last damning deed of his committance, and since even the ‘very stones cry out in mutiny,’ I have resolved to keep back nothing that will tend to inspire in the breasts of the freemen of Kansas a tithe of the deathless hatred I bear to that man. If you wonder at that hatred, listen to my story !—Two years ago I was a peaceful, happy man ; the husband of a beautiful

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and fondly cherished wife, and the owner of a pleasant cabin home. Where is now that peace ;—that wife ; —that cabin home ? All, all are gone, and I am a wanderer on the face of the earth ! Hamilton was the destroyer of my happiness ! He came last winter a year with his gang of ruffians to my humble, but happy home, while I was absent on business, and in the cover of darkness he committed a deed on the person of my delicate, helpless wife, too horrible and atrocious for even a fiend to have committed. I did not arrive home until late in the night. They had then been gone for some time. Startled by seeing no light, I hastened in without taking care of my horse, and to my horror and amazement I found my fondly cherished wife lying upon the bed entirely senseless, and to all appearance at the point of death. I called her by every endearing epithet, but she made me no reply. I bathed her head and face with restoratives, and kneeling before her, chafed her cold, cold limbs, but for a long time without any effect. Finally, after what seemed hours of torture to me, she slowly revived from her death-like state, and before morning was able to relate the horrible particulars of the visit of Hamilton. Her system, however, had received too great a shock for its delicate organization to withstand, and after lingering throughout the winter and spring, she died in early June—died in my

arms, and was buried on the banks of the Little Osage, in sight of the home where she had lived a few short months of happiness, and where she received the murderous blow that wrought her untimely death.—Comrades, up to that time a thought of revenge had never crossed the peaceful current of my existence. I was peaceful by nature ; I had never participated in any of the Territorial difficulties ; I knew not Hamilton even, only by name—but, comrades, when I saw the earth heaped above her murdered form, I took a solemn oath, and the angels on high registered it, that I would know no rest, and know no home, until I had vengeance on her cowardly, soulless assassin. Comrades, you know my life since that period !—You know that I have been true to my solemn vow ! I have known no *rest*, and known no *home* ; I have sought by night, and by day ; alone, and with armed array, for an opportunity to avenge my undying wrong with his heart's blood, but as yet I have sought in vain. Some power has seemed to protect him at the very time I deemed myself most sure of satiating my vengeance ; but I bide my time, until the hand of God or man's arrests the murderer in his career of crime."

As soon as the speaker ceased his narration, he moved backwards to his old position in the corner of the Fort, and in a moment was apparently as profoundly



buried in thought as he was previous to his sudden appearance on the theatre of action. A few minutes served to remove the first marked impression of his thrilling narration, and in a short time the general current of feeling reverted to its former careless, livelier channel.

And so with joke, and tale, and song wore the hours of the night in Fort Hamilton. It appeared strange to me, at first, that so much gayety and apparent unconcern should exist amid such danger as then menaced the frontier, but I soon learned by experience that the mind familiar grown with danger, soon accustoms itself to exercise complete control over the feelings even in times of the most imminent peril ; and the Kansas settler who has lived for years where murders are of almost daily occurrence, and where law, property, and life itself rests upon the bowie-knife and revolver basis, more than on any other tenure ; looks upon life, at home or when abroad, in time of partial peace or during open hostility, as something he may lose at any moment, and all times, and all places are similar to him. Yet the gayety which he at times exhibits is not by any means the trivial unmeaning merriment of indifference ; but frequently assumed to cheer the drooping spirits of the more desponding, or to woo the mind from its own melancholy broodings over personal sorrows, or the distracted state of a land overrun, wasted, and well-nigh lost to freedom.

The next morning our company was increased by the arrival of some ten or a dozen volunteers from the neighborhood of Osawattomie. They were a valuable acquisition to our company, being mostly armed with Sharpe's rifles, and men who had seen considerable service. The most of that day was spent in scouting over the country adjacent to the border. Feeling more at home at such employment than in assisting in the culinary department in the Fort, I spent a considerable portion of the day in the saddle, accompanying various scouting expeditions. The views from some of the high mounds scattered over the country were exceedingly beautiful. From one near the border we could see the town of West Point, and a great extent of surrounding country. We could see that the town was strongly guarded, and occasionally a small scouting party would gallop out of the town and approach us in a defiant manner, but they were invariably careful not to get within range of our Sharpe's rifles.

Towards evening a suspicious looking character, mounted on a sorry looking mule, rode up to the Fort, and begged permission to remain all night. He said he was a traveler in the Territory, and was on his way from Fort Scott to Kansas City. He came from a southward direction, but as it was feared he was a spy from Missouri, who had just crossed the border a few miles below as a ruse, and had come to spy out



the actual number of men in Fort Hamilton, he was furnished with some eatables and started off without being allowed to see the inside of the camp. He made so many excuses to remain until morning, that the suspicions entertained concerning his true character were almost confirmed, and he was at last told to begone instantly, and that if he was ever seen around there again he might stay longer than he wanted to. This threat, coupled with the firm manner in which it was spoken, produced the desired effect, and the *would-be guest* made his cropped-eared mule carry him off faster than it brought him to our presence.

Nothing of importance transpired that night, and the next day was but a repetition of the day that preceded it. The spirits of the little garrison never flagged, and the rougher life of the citizen-soldier was softened by the hours spent around the camp-fire, listening to the tale and the song that never failed to make their appearance, to revive his spirits, and form the evening's amusement. There was but little profanity or obscenity in the language employed by the majority of the settlers; rude and unpolished it was frequently, but there was a freedom from blasphemy and vulgarity in it, that one would scarcely expect to find in men who had led such rough and unsettled lives.

The next day rumor came to our camp of fresh outrages committed on the Little Osage, in Bourbon co..

by the Missourians and their allies in Fort Scott ; and that Capt. Montgomery who was then on the Little Osage with his company, was preparing for a march on Fort Scott, where it was reported that Brocket, Hill, and a number of the men concerned in the *Marais des Cygnes* massacre, were harboring under the protection of the troops of the Fort. Wishing to ascertain for myself the truth of these rumors, I concluded I would leave Fort Hamilton that afternoon, and return to Sugar Mound, from whence I would start the next morning for the neighborhood of Fort Scott. Just as I was getting ready to leave the camp, a young man living near Sugar Mound received a summons from home for him to return immediately, and I was thus accidentally favored with company the greater part of the journey.

The afternoon was quite sultry, and we walked our horses the greater part of the distance ; beguiling the way with pleasant converse until we arrived at a place where our roads diverged in separate directions. I then urged my horse to a faster pace, and arrived at Sugar Mound just before night-fall.

## CHAPTER IX.

## A NIGHT ON MINE CREEK.

"The brave man faces dangers feared,  
'Tis only cowards fly;  
Upon the soil our homes are reared,  
We'll live, or guarding die."—BORDER SONG.

I HAD scarcely arrived at the place, and sent off my horse to the settler from whom I had obtained him, when word was brought to the grocery that a party of Missourians had been on Mine Creek, a stream some four or five miles from the Mound, the evening previous, and had committed considerable depredation on the settlers. The messenger who brought the word said, that owing to their being disappointed in getting help to assist them to guard their settlement that night, he had been despatched at that late hour to the Mound to procure assistance, if any men could possibly be spared from duty at that place. He also added that the settlers there were almost worn out with constant watching day and night, and stood badly in need of rest, which they could not obtain unless assistance was

sent them from some quarter, as their exposed position near the border made them liable to an attack at any moment.

There were quite a number of men around the little grocery of the Mound, who had collected to guard the embryo town which, from its possessing among other things a large steam-mill, had been repeatedly threatened by the Missourians. The question of sparing some of their number was immediately taken into consideration by the little group of men, who finally decided that five or six might be spared, leaving it to the men themselves which should go. I was wearied with my long ride, and had meditated getting a good night's rest before departing South, but the men seemed reluctant to volunteer, and one young man with whom I was slightly acquainted, said that if I would go he would go, and in order to get the requisite number, I made up my mind to accompany the little party.

As the place we were directed to was not more than five or six miles from the Mound, we thought we would not go to the trouble of procuring horses, and so making what few preparations were indispensably necessary, we left the Mound just before sun set for our assigned destination in Mine Creek. We were six in number—all young men—and a gayer party than we were that May night seldom trod the prairies of Kansas. Darkness set in before we had accom-

plished half the journey, but some of the party were intimately acquainted with the country, and with laugh, and joke, and song, we whiled the time until we struck the heavy timber skirting both sides of Mine Creek. The uneven character of the ground then rendered the greatest caution necessary to prevent constant stumbling over the roots, dead logs, &c., that impeded our progress, and silence was preserved by the little party, save when some unlucky member, in stumbling over a log, or plunging through a morass, would give vent to some expression more *expressive* than *classic* or *elegant*. After emerging from the timber we soon came in sight of the building to which we were directed, which was a small, log church, erected by the early settlers of Mine Creek as a place of worship, but which the troubles of the times had converted into a fort and retreat for the settlers in times of danger to the frontier.

On arriving at the place, we found about a dozen armed men assembled, who evinced by their cool, determined manner that they were resolved to protect their families and their properties to the last drop of their blood. They were the surrounding settlers, and were of all ages, from the hoary grandsire to the slender stripling, who had just commenced to learn the use of arms. The church, or fort more properly speaking, was about two miles from the border, and on an



elevation thinly covered with timber. Between the church and the border there were no settlers living ; there had been a few scattering settlements, but the houses were all abandoned at the first commencement of serious difficulties.

After putting out strong guards wherever needed, the residue of the little company seated themselves in the rude building in front of the genial fire blazing on the broad, open hearth, and fell to discoursing on the stirring events of the previous night, during the invasion of the Territory by the Missourians. Wishing to learn the particulars of the affair, of which I had heard such conflictory accounts, I requested an old man, seated near me, to inform me of the facts relative to the matter, which he did as follows :—

“For the past fortnight we have kept up a guard, but until last night our settlement was not visited to our knowledge, by any party intending us mischief. Last night we put out our guards as usual, giving a young man by the name of Boucher the extreme out-post towards the line. As this out-picket is better than a mile from here, it is the custom for whoever is to be stationed there to take a fleet horse with him, so that if any signs of danger are perceivable, he can gallop back, and notify the rest of the approach of the enemy. Boucher took his post at ten o'clock in the evening, and was to remain on guard until twelve,



when he was to be relieved by the guard appointed to succeed him. It was a dark night, as perhaps you remember, and Boucher said that even when straining his eyes to the utmost, he could not see a dozen yards ahead of himself on the prairie, but as he was stationed near the main road from the border to the settlement on Mine Creek, he was not much afraid that any company of men could slip by him unperceived. His watch had about half expired when he fancied he heard the tread of horses' hoofs on the distant prairie. Boucher is a brave fellow, and instead of mounting his horse and rushing into camp with the intelligence, as many would have done in his situation, he resolved to make certain his suspicions before communicating what might prove a false alarm, and so remained at his post until the tread of horses' hoofs, and the roll of wagon wheels were clearly distinguishable. Boucher then hastened to mount his horse, but in his anxiety to ascertain the existence, force, &c., of the enemy, he had delayed so long that the sounds of his horse's hoofs were heard in his cautious moving off by the enemy, and a number immediately started in pursuit of the flying Boucher, who, when he found he was pursued, immediately urged his horse into his swiftest gallop. It was a race for life ! His pursuers at first called on him to stop if he valued his existence, but finding that he paid no attention to their

summons, they commenced a fire on him with their rifles. Owing to the darkness of the night, however, their balls took no effect, and Boucher was rapidly gaining on his pursuers, when in hastily crossing a deep ravine, his horse stumbled and fell, precipitating his rider forcibly to the earth. Boucher was stunned for a few moments by his fall, and in the interim his horse galloped off, drawing the horsemen on a false scent, and allowing poor Boucher opportunity to make his way to our camp, which had been aroused by the report of fire-arms, and was prepared for the approach of the enemy. They did not come, however, not caring to attack our post, which they knew was strongly guarded, but contented themselves with gathering up some stock and furniture, found around and in some of the deserted houses of the settlers, contiguous to the frontier, with which they left the Territory."

"But, why, was there a wagon in the party?" said I, when the old man had finished his recital, to which I in common with all assembled, had listened with interest.

"Why," said the old man, "we think the main object of the expedition last night was plunder—that it was a mere marauding party, and the wagon or wagons were brought along to carry off the pillage they might obtain in their search of the deserted houses of the settlers."

Finding that the old man was quite intelligent and inclined to be friendly, I continued the conversation, which insensibly flowed into other channels after the above narrative had been fully commented on by the various members of the little company.

"This building, I believe, was once used as a church," said I, addressing the old man in an interval of silence.

"Yes," he replied, "we formerly held meetings here, and very strange it seems to me to be sitting here with the rifle in my hands, where I have so often sat with prayer-book instead, listening to the words of the preacher."

"You are a member of the church then?"

"Yes, I am one (6) of five brothers. We came to the Territory in '55 from Iowa. We were all of one religious persuasion. We came to Kansas to live, where land was cheap, so that we could provide homes for our children, and our children's children. One of our first labors was to build this church, which we deemed would answer the purpose until the neighborhood demanded a larger edifice. The idea that it would ever be needed for such a purpose as the present never entered the mind of one of its builders. All then was peace along this now troubled border, and for months we worshiped in peace, but in '56 our first difficulties commenced. Three hundred men under

Gen. Clarke invaded the Territory, and our flourishing settlement received the first check to its prosperity. We made no resistance ; we had been taught to obey the divine precepts of our Saviour, viz., to 'love our enemy as ourselves,' to 'present the other cheek when smitten,' &c., and we acted agreeably to our early teachings. But it did not save us from insult and outrage from the hands of those border-ruffians. Our horses were driven off, our stores and dwellings many of them were fired and plundered, and a great number of peaceful, quiet settlers taken as prisoners to Missouri, from whence some of them never returned. Yet this, bad as it was, was but the commencement of our difficulties. The year of '57 was tolerably peaceful, but ever since the enemies of Kansas have endeavored to foist that illegal and odious instrument, the Le-compton Constitution, on the unwilling freemen of Kansas, our history has been one long succession of wrongs and outrages, practiced by the ruffians of the border on the peaceful, inoffensive settlers of Kansas. One of my brothers, who acted as sort of a minister for the congregation, left early in the spring for Iowa ; another is making preparations to depart as soon as possible, but the residue have no thought of leaving, and no other intention, come what may, but of living or dying upon the soil of Kansas.

“ I once thought that all wars, whether defensive



or otherwise, were unjustifiable, but since living in the Territory, and seeing what I have witnessed, my feelings have undergone a change, and whether it is right in the sight of the All-wise Jehovah or not, it now seems right to me to defend our lives and our families by any means in our power that may best effect our object. My brothers, however, could not persuade themselves into this mode of thinking, and hence have left the Territory until better days shall dawn on persecuted Kansas."

After the old man had finished his narration, I took my turn in standing guard, which brought the time to midnight, when I returned and stretched myself on one of the rude benches to obtain a few hours' slumber. The night was sultry, and the fire which had been kindled in the early part of the evening, had long gone down, and died away to ashes. Towards morning I was awakened by a severe thunder-storm—one of the most severe I ever witnessed. Such sharp and incessant lightning, and such stunning and continuous thunder, I never knew outside of Kansas. The wind too had risen with the storm, and swept among the scattering trees that surrounded the fortress, with a violence that threatened to upheave them from their solid foundations. It finally passed over, and when the sun rose it shone on a clear, unclouded heaven. Soon after breakfast we started for the Mound, first

promising our friends we would send a force to assist them in standing guard over their settlement the coming night. We had a pleasant walk, laughing over the adventures that befell our journey the evening previous, &c., and arrived at the Mound about 10 o'clock, a. m.

In the afternoon one of Capt. Montgomery's men stopped a short time at the little grocery, on his return from the northern part of Linn Co., where he had been on some business of a private character. Wishing to get some reliable information of the state of affairs in the neighborhood of Fort Scott, I drew him aside and revealed to him something of my character, my purposes in the Territory, &c. He told me that there had been no attack on Fort Scott as yet, but that the next day there was to be a large meeting of the citizens of Bourbon Co., on the Little Osage, where the propriety of an attack, and other important matters would be taken into consideration. I informed him that I would attend, and he gave me some valuable hints concerning my contemplated journey, after which he took his departure.

His name was John McCannon. He was an under officer in the company, and was one of Montgomery's most valued and devoted followers. His home was at that time on the Little Osage, but he was by birth a Pennsylvanian. I was pleased with his frank, open



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countenance, and bold, manly bearing at our first interview ; and I now know from weeks and even months of almost constant association with him, that among all the noble spirits of Kansas, who have freely periled their lives in her behalf, she owns not a nobler heart than that which throbs in the form of young McCannon.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE POLITICAL CONVENTION.

"Justice is lame, as well as blind among us,  
The laws corrupt to their ends that make them,  
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,  
That every day upstart to enslave us deeper."

OTWAY'S VENICE PRESERVED.

THE morning of the 29th of May was one of almost unrivaled brilliancy. A severe storm during the night had purified the atmosphere, and given an additional lustre to the glow and richness of the prairie and woodland. I left the little grocery at an early hour of the morning, and following the stage-road to Fort Scott, I crossed the Mound which lies due south of the embryo village hitherto alluded to, and came out on the higher plain beyond just as the sun rose above the green slopes of the undulating prairie that stretched wave-like away to the verge of the eastern horizon. I had started thus early as I intended performing the journey on foot, and I wished to have sufficient time at my disposal to enjoy the magnificent scenery through which I passed without

fear of being too late for the assembling of the Convention. Between Sugar Mound and the Little Osage there are two small streams of water, although the distance from the Mound to the place of meeting does not exceed twelve miles. These streams are heavily fringed on their banks with timber for the width of about a half mile ; the intervening distance being prairie, of the richest and most productive quality. The country was but thinly settled, and but a small portion of the land was even claimed, except along the streams where the dense woodland had been the feature of attraction in the eyes of the emigrant.

As the sun mounted the heaven the day grew warm and sultry, and just before arriving at Loss Creek, a tributary of the Little Osage, I paused at a way-side spring to obtain a draught of its cool, delicious water, and rest a few minutes from my journey. The spring was at the head of a small ravine which gradually increased in width and depth as it receded towards Loss Creek. A short distance from the spring I noticed some strawberries hanging temptingly from the vines, and approaching them, I commenced plucking the luscious fruit, wandering as I did so further and further down the ravine, where they appeared to grow more luxuriantly than where I at first beheld them. While thus engaged I had insensibly wandered about half the distance from the spring to Loss Creek, and

was just returning to the stage-road satiated with the blood-red fruit I was trampling under foot, when I heard a noise as of some animal near me, and looking around I saw a large prairie wolf bound from a fissure in some rocks in the side of the ravine near me, and run rapidly towards Loss Creek.

Surprise for a moment kept me motionless, but recovering almost immediately, I drew my revolver from my pocket, and taking a hurried aim, fired at the almost flying animal. It did not fall, although I could perceive by its unsteady onward motion that it had received the ball, and aiming again, I despatched another leaden messenger, which brought the animal to the earth. I approached it, but finding that it was almost dead, I returned to the place from which it emerged when I first beheld it. There was quite an aperture in the rocks, and looking in I could see in the furthest recesses of the cavern, four shining sparks—the eyes of the two young whelps of the old wolf I shot. I blocked up the mouth of the cavern with loose stones, and proceeded on my journey, until I arrived at the house of the nearest settler, to whose romping boys I told the story, and who, scarcely waiting for me to give the necessary particulars, quickly started with laugh and shout for the place where I had secured the little prisoners.

Crossing Loss Creek, I continued on and arrived at

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the place about 11 a. m. Quite a number of settlers had collected, but as many who were expected at the meeting resided at a great distance, the time appointed for the organization of the Convention was not until 1 o'clock p. m. The place at which the meeting was called was Raysville, a small town on the south bank of the Little Osage, some eighteen or twenty miles north of Fort Scott. It was located in '57, by three brothers of the name of Ray, from the State of Iowa. They erected a large steam-mill the same year, and immediately commenced the laying out and building up of the town which bears their name. They are enthusiastically Free State, and the town has taken its tone and character, as well as name from its founders. It is the political antipode of Fort Scott, and for the past eighteen months has been its most formidable opponent. There is not a town in all Southern Kansas whose history has been so thoroughly interwoven with the history of that portion of the Territory as the town of Raysville. Indeed there has scarcely a movement emanated from the Free State party of Southern Kansas, but what Raysville has been directly or indirectly concerned therein ; and all last winter and spring, while the surrounding country was overrun by the guerrillas of Fort Scott, and the hopes of the long persecuted settlers of emerging from the gloom that overhung the land were faintest ; in

the town of Raysville and along the Osage river settlements, the standard of freedom was kept ever unfurled ; and the hardy settlers, aided by the strong arm of a Montgomery, and a Bayne, had been able, even during the darkest hours of their history, to make their river a barrier to the further progress of the guerrillas of the Fort.

The time between my arrival and the organizing of the Convention, I employed in mingling among the assembled settlers, who collected in knots were earnestly conferring with each other on the alarming state of the Territory. A murder had been committed the night before in the neighborhood of Fort Scott by some of the outlaws harboring in the town and Fort, where it was positively known some of the leading ruffians in the massacre of the Marais des Cygnes were publicly making their residence ; and fierce and bitter were the denunciations of the settlers on their olden oppressors—the citizens and soldiers of Fort Scott. All the while the various desultory conversations were going forward, fresh additions were being made to the large assemblage already in attendance, and when the time for the organization of the Convention arrived, judging by the mass of faces, and the number of horses picketed over the prairie, there must have been at least two hundred men in the town of Raysville. This number may appear small to some



of my eastern readers who are accustomed to associate the term of mass-convention with the turn-out of thousands, but in a thinly settled country like Southern Kansas, it is a cause of more than ordinary moment that draws together two hundred of its settlers, especially at such a time as that of which I write, when many had been intimidated into leaving the Territory.

The Convention assembled in a large, unfinished frame building, and not only was the interior of the structure packed to its utmost capacity, but scores and scores of the hardy pioneer settlers of Bourbon Co. were congregated around the building unable to obtain admittance. The Convention was organized by appointing J. C. Burnet of Little Osage, Chairman, who was assisted by the usual number of officers.—The call for the Convention was then read, which stated in a few words that the exigencies of the moment demanded a Convention of the citizens of Bourbon Co., to devise means best calculated to restore peace to Southern Kansas, and avert the storm which menaced their lives, their homes, and their families. After the call was read, a committee of seven was appointed to draw up resolutions, expressive of the sense of the meeting. While the committee were out, the resolutions of the Fort Scott Convention held a few days previous, *ostensibly* for the same purpose, but in reality a *bogus affair*, were taken up and handled without gloves by some of the delegates present.

Judge Williams, of the third judicial district, residing in Fort Scott, had promised attendance at the Convention, but as he had rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the people of the district by his one-sided, pro-slavery decisions, he doubtless thought he would be safer under the guns of the Fort, than among the free settlers of the Osage whom he had so wronged by his Jeffrey-like decisions, and accordingly sent an excuse of ignorance of the meeting for his non-attendance.

The apology, when submitted by one of the delegates from the Fort to the Convention, created frequent and long-continued bursts of laughter, and when the merriment had somewhat subsided, the secretary of the meeting, T. B. Jackman, a settler on the Osage, and as jovial and merry a wight, and yet withal as bold and daring in time of actual danger, as ever left the land of the Pilgrims for a home in Kansas, arose to his feet, and in a short, pithy speech to the Convention, completely showed up the falsity of the Judge's excuse ; stating that he himself was in Fort Scott the early part of the week, waited on his Judgeship, read him the call just read to the Convention, and received from him the most positive assurances of his attendance at the meeting on the day in the call stated.

"This," said the indignant Jackman, waxing warm

with his narration, "is the simple truth of the matter, as I have proof present to confirm my words if needed, and Judge Williams, in sending the message he did to this Convention, wilfully stated what he knew was false, and could be proven as such. No, Judge Williams is afraid to meet the injured settlers of the Osage face to face, and sends this namby, pamby, lying message as an excuse for not doing so ! I can honor a man who has the courage to be at all times an out-spoken enemy, but for such a man as Judge Williams, who, while clothed in judicial ermine, has made all possible use of that dignity and power, to pervert the ends of justice, and crush out freedom from the land ; making of law a mockery ; and yet all the while hypocritically professing to *want to cultivate an acquaintance with the people he so studiously and carefully avoids*, I have no respect, and I care not if he knows it !"

After Jackman, whose sentiments seemed to have met the cordial approval of the meeting, had resumed his seat, a lull occurred in the Convention, caused by its waiting the momentarily expected resolutions ; and while it is in a state of expectancy, let us take a glance at some of the chief notables of this strangely gathered, strangely composed Southern Kansas Convention.

Yonder tall and finely proportioned man, seated a

short distance from the Chairman, clad in a garb of dingy gray, with a serious, thoughtful expression on his dark, but finely formed features, partially hidden by a pair of jet-black whiskers and thick moustache ; with deep-set eyes, keen and piercing, and with dark hair waving back from a broad, high forehead, the whole look and physiognomy of the man denoting one greatly above the ordinary, and fitted for deeds of daring ; is the Hero of the Little Osage and Marmaton, the terror of South-Western Missouri border-counties—Capt. Montgomery. He is here on this occasion, an invited speaker, and as he sits there buried in thought, the occasional lifting of that coal-black eye that seems to pierce your inmost soul at a glance, or the right hand wandering as by habit to the revolver at his belt, is the only outward indication of the existence of that mighty power which has made the name of Montgomery familiar as a household word.

Yonder burly six-footer, leaning carelessly against a corner post of the building, hatless and coatless, his position displaying his brawny muscular developments to the best advantage ; with a careless, good-humored expression on his sun-burnt, bearded face, and with hair slightly tinged with gray brushed carelessly away from a broad but not high forehead, is the faithful coadjutor of Montgomery in his deeds of daring, the celebrated Capt. Bayne. Between the two the most

perfect confidence exists. Bayne yields to Montgomery's judgment in all things, content to execute the tasks assigned him for execution by his leader, and when he fails to accomplish a thing you may know it is beyond the power of man to accomplish it.

Standing by the only door leading in and out of the building is a young man who has just affected his entrance. He is apparently not more than eight-and-twenty, small, and rather effeminate looking, and an air of general listlessness and indifference sits upon him as he runs his eye carelessly over the Convention. A stranger to him would at once pronounce him to be one of the most ordinary and inert of men, incapable of performing anything requiring energy and promptness of thought and action. Yet such a judgment would be just the reverse of the truth. That eye, apparently glancing so carelessly over the variously composed assemblage, takes in everything worthy of note at a glance, and that form leaning so languidly against the partition, a hundred perilous situations have unmistakably demonstrated, contains a heart as brave and gallant as any throbbing around him. The Convention, unknown to but few, contained in the young man described the High Sheriff of Douglas county, Deputy United States Marshal Walker. The object of his visit I well knew, and so will ere long the reader, but to return for the present to the proceedings of the Convention.



The committee came in and reported they could not agree upon resolutions, and asked to be discharged, which request was granted by the Chairman. It appeared that there were one or two conservatives on the committee, who kept continually objecting to the resolutions offered by the various members comprising it, and hence the result. After some discussion the idea of appointing another Committee was abandoned, and the Convention resolved itself into a *Committee of the Whole on the State of Kansas*, giving to all who desired an opportunity to express themselves by speech to the Convention. Quite a number embraced the privilege, and the speeches generally would compare favorably with those delivered at any Eastern Convention I ever attended. Indeed, judging by some of the requisites of oratory, earnestness of delivery, effect produced, etc., they were even superior. Some of the descriptions of the indignities and outrages perpetrated by the troops and citizens of Fort Scott, on the peaceful settlers of the Territory, were shocking in the extreme. Partially prepared as I was before going to Bourbon Co. for what I might see and hear on my arrival, I was fairly astounded at some of the revelations of the settlers on the Osage and Mar-maton rivers, which revealed a darker page in the gloomy history than I ever imagined could have occurred ; and nothing but the truth-convincing man-



ner in which it was spoken, and the matter-of-fact way in which it was received, could have persuaded me of its truth. One of the most masterly expositions of the outrages perpetrated by the troops and guerrillas of the Fort, and the abuses of their system of jurisprudence by Judge Williams, was made by a settler by the name of Griffith, a New Englander by birth, and for many years a professor in one of the Eastern Colleges. No one could listen to his calm, unimpassioned narration of the grossest and most unprovoked outrages without feeling impressed by their truthfulness, and when after a long enumeration of the grievances they had sustained; the almost nightly murders that had been committed, and the sneers and insults they had time and again received when they had petitioned for redress and protection to the civil authorities; he wound up with saying that *he had no confidence in the laws, or in Judge Williams of Fort Scott, and that peace man as he was, he would carry the revolver until their wrongs were redressed and justice done them*;—the look of determination that his face wore convinced his hearers that his resolution was one that had been carefully considered, and would be strictly fulfilled.

Towards the close of the meeting an elderly man by the name of Kimberlin made a brief speech, which from its dissimilarity to the others I will present the

reader with a brief synopsis. Kimberlin was a minister of the Methodist denomination, a peace man in every respect, but he was ardently Free State in principle, and, from making his home on the Marmaton the resort of Montgomery whenever that officer choose to avail himself of the proffered shelter, with whom he was very intimate, he had become quite obnoxious to the gentry of the Fort, who in order to get him in their power finally issued a writ for his arrest on some trumped up charge of murder. On several different occasions they attempted to execute the writ, and once were only prevented from arresting him by the heroic conduct of his only daughter, a young lady of about seventeen, who, on seeing them approach, prevailed on her sire to secrete himself from observation, and snatching up the musket that stood in the corner of the room, and boldly confronting her foe at the door way, she told them that the first man that advanced a step further would advance on certain death. Awed by her courage, and perhaps struck by her filial devotion to her father, the ruffians, after a few threats of violence, which she heard with unmoved composure, slowly and unwillingly retreated from the dwelling, and by the *heroism* of the *daughter* the father was saved. The idea, however, that he, a minister, a dispenser of God's holy word, should have this brand of shame pursuing his steps, and be forced to flee

his fellow-men, preyed greatly on his mind, as will be seen by the following words:—

“My friends ! I feel that I must say a few words on this occasion. I am to-day branded with the charge of murder. Men are dogging my steps to arrest me and have me taken to Fort Scott, where after a mock trial the mark of Cain would doubtless be affixed to my brow. What have I done ? Of what have I been guilty ? Nothing !—The babe unborn is not more guiltless of murder than I. There is nothing in me that could respond to such an act.—The blood of an assassin flows not in my veins. My grandfather was a Capt. under Gen. George Washington, and my father was a Capt. under Gen. Anthony Wayne, and their bones and ashes lie to-day an eternal honor to their country ; and do you think I, their descendant, could or would be guilty of murder ?—No, I am above it ! And it almosts breaks my heart to think that my name will go back to Indiana, where I was born, and where I was reared, coupled with the charge of murder.”

The crowning speech of the day, however, judging both by its intrinsic worth, and by its effect upon the assemblage, was Capt. Montgomery's, who at the vociferous and not-to-be-denied calls of the masses, made the closing speech before the Convention. The unbounded popularity of Capt. Montgomery in Southern

Kansas would insure attention to whatever he might utter, even if he possessed a poor delivery ; but fluent and even eloquent as he is in public speaking, he carries the feelings of his hearers with him almost at pleasure whenever he addresses himself to them.

The greater portion of his remarks were devoted to giving a full exposition of the principles by which he and his company were strictly governed, and which, he observed, although unjustifiable in a country where laws were regularly formed and administered, became strictly justifiable in a land where the law was not the legitimate offspring of the people, but was an *illegitimate* and a *bastard*, and where even that *spurious imitation* was *expounded* by the corrupt and servile tools of a hostile and designing Administration. Towards the close of his remarks, he said :—

“The troops I have the honor to command are of the order called ‘guerrilla,’ and are bound by the rules of strict guerrilla warfare. We make not, as falsely charged, a war upon all who differ with us politically, but only on those who have been and are warring upon our people. The quiet, peaceable Pro-Slavery man has nothing to fear from us ; he may remain among us, and enjoy his political opinions unmolested. We will protect, and have protected him in his rights. Two of my nearest neighbors are Pro-Slavery men, yet they have lived by me for years and

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have never been disturbed. But the violent Pro-Slavery man who will not give us the country we have fairly conquered, but still continues to molest, disturb, and kill the peaceable settlers ; we go to and say to him, this country is ours ; you and I have fought which shall have it, and we have fairly conquered you, and mean to have it. In so many days you must leave it. And as the idea of 'guerrilla' is self-sustaining, we also say, if you have any money, we must have some of it, and if you have any horses, we must have them for service, etc. Yet I am very careful not to allow my men to take from any but persons of this description. If they do, I expel them immediately from my company, and restore the articles to their rightful possessors. I never allow an outrage to be committed on a woman. Whatever she claims, no matter who or what her husband may be, is sacred. If I have ever taken life, it has been in the heat of battle, and my men are strictly prohibited from taking life in any other manner. I did say in a moment of excitement, while standing over the dead bodies of the men killed at that terrible massacre of the Marais des Cygnes, that for every dead man laying on the ground reddened with his blood, I would require ten of his assassins, and for every wounded man I would have five, but in a short time that feeling passed away. I reflected that man was not to be the avenger, that



that was an attribute of the Divinity alone, and that He had said, 'As a man sows, so shall he reap,' and 'as he metes, so shall it be meted unto him again.'"

He then turned his attention to one Stratton, a sham Free State lawyer, from Fort Scott, who, in a carefully prepared speech, had counseled the people to pursue a course of "masterly inactivity," to have full confidence in the bogus laws, the expounding of them by Judge Williams, &c. ; and by a series of questions and the testimony of witnesses, completely laid bare the hypocrisy of the pretended Free State attorney to the Convention, that fairly roared with laughter on hearing Stratton convicted of having said, a short time previous, in Fort Scott, that he hoped Kansas would be a slave State, so that he could own a lot of niggers. After sufficiently flaying poor Stratton, Montgomery dropped him as unworthy of further notice, merely remarking that there were a great many recent converts to Free Stateism, and that Mr. Stratton was probably one of them.

After he concluded his remarks, three cheers were proposed and given for Capt. Montgomery, the Hero of Southern Kansas, and three groans for Judge Williams and the ruffians of Fort Scott, when the Convention adjourned.

As soon as possible after adjournment, the object of Sheriff Walker's visit South was communicated to the



boys, which was, viz., to arrest some of the murderers harboring in the Fort, for whom he had writs, etc.; and I saw more than one cap swung aloft on receipt of the joyful intelligence that a visit to Fort Scott was once more in contemplation. As it was essential to the success of the expedition, that the Fort gentry should be kept in ignorance of our intentions until the proper time for their enlightenment, the preparations for our departure the next morning by day-break, went on quietly until all was completed. The plan agreed upon by Walker and the leading citizens of Bourbon Co., was for him to stay over night at Raysville, and start with all the horsemen he could raise (which was estimated at at least two score,) early in the morning, and ride to the Marmaton, where there would be a reinforcement of boys to accompany the posse from there to the Fort. This was in pursuance with the request sent to Walker, that if he would come to Bourbon Co., the signers of the petition would pledge him a sufficient posse of settlers, to make the arrest in contemplation.

The open-hearted brothers Ray had provided liberally for the Convention, and with their noted hospitality threw open their houses to all who saw fit to remain in the town during the night. I accepted the invitation of L—— Ray, and found myself in company with Sheriff Walker, young McCannon, etc. The evening

passed away pleasantly in listening to Sheriff Walker's thrilling narrations of the border-ruffian invasions in '55-6, of the northern portion of the Territory, which, at the solicitation of the company, he was induced to give, winding up with a humorous description of his ferreting out the election returns last winter, that had been secreted under the wood-pile at Lecompton, by John C. Calhoun, of candle-box notoriety.

Suddenly I missed young McCannon, and inquired of several his whereabouts ; none appeared to know what had become of him, and I knew not until the next day, that while we slept that night, Bayne, McCannon, and half a score of men, in obedience to the order of their chieftain, were steadily riding southward over the prairie, amid the darkness and storm that raged all throughout the latter part of the night, to gain a position against day-break, between Fort Scott and the Missouri line.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE MARCH ON FORT SCOTT.

"O ! thou, Almighty ! awful and supreme !  
Redress, revenge an injured nation's wrongs."

MARTYN'S TIMOLEON.

THE next morning the inhabitants of the little town of Raysville were early astir, and although the storm which had raged all throughout the latter part of the night, had by no means subsided, the preparations for our departure were urged as rapidly as possible to completion. There were quite a number of vexatious delays ; horses, saddles, &c., were to be procured, which rapidly consumed time, and when at last the preparations were announced as fully completed, it was found that the little posse, instead of numbering two score of men, barely mustered one, all told, and this small complement only procured by enlisting every man capable of bearing arms that could be found around the place.

Whether the poor turn out of the settlers was attributable to their conscientious scruples about break-

ing the Sabbath an imperative necessity compelled us to violate, or to a sober second thought that the day might not prove a day of pleasure to the expedition, I know not, but certain it is, no more appeared, and after waiting long beyond the time agreed on for delinquent comrades, we rode out of the town and struck the broad Indian trail leading from the Osage to the Marmaton. Faster and faster fell the spring rain, drenching us through and through and blinding our view of the prairie ahead, but lightly and gayly in his trooper-saddle rode our leader, the cool, intrepid Walker, and stimulated and encouraged by his example, not one of the little posse would have turned his back on Fort Scott even though he had been assured that certain danger lay in his onward path. A novel spectacle we must have presented to the gazers of the few scattering settlers' cabins we passed in our ride that stormy Sabbath morning. The slouched hats, the dripping clothing, the partially concealed weapons, to prevent the rain from unfitting them for use, all combined to present a picture ludicrous in the extreme. The appearance of some of the members of the little company was extremely mirth-provoking. Jackman (one of the speakers at the Convention the day previous) was particularly an object of diversion. Mounted on a mule, which he had picked up on the prairie, his little figure looked even more diminutive

than when dismounted, and the speeches he made, and the capers he cut for our diversion during our journey, I would not attempt to repeat or describe. He was indeed a being gifted with versatile accomplishments. I have seen him when I have thought the buffoon or jester must certainly have been his chief study, so well he played his part—when there appeared to be no pride or self-respect about the man, and no higher ambition in him than to make mirth for those around him. And again I have seen him in time of danger, or in the rostrum when the whole man was so metamorphosed, it seemed almost impossible to realize that the harlequin, the warrior, and the orator, were one and the same. He was a man of profound acquirements, a thorough classical scholar, and at that time a regular correspondent for one or more leading papers in New England.

A hard gallop of two hours brought us to the Marmaton, where we found about an equal number of men awaiting our arrival. But an unforeseen difficulty had arisen. Swollen by the still falling rain, the Marmaton rushed swiftly by ; its deep and wide current forming an impassable barrier between our horses and the Fort. What was to be done ? There was an old Indian canoe in the stream, but it would contain but two beside the one to guide its course, which would make the transit extremely tedious, and we

would then be five miles from the Fort, a long walk for men unused to such exercise. On the border of the stream a deliberative council was convened. Among the more prominent of the settlers, I noticed several of the speakers at the Convention the day previous, Griffith, Kimberlin, etc. There was a great diversity of opinion as to the best course to pursue. Many said wait until morning. Walker stood apart with knit and gloomy brow. I was near him and heard him mutter, "O, for a score of the Lawrence boys!" At that moment so sorely vexed was our leader with the indecision of the party, that I believe he had lost all confidence in our reliability in time of danger.

"What is your opinion, Walker?" was finally asked.

"When a boy at school I was taught that *delays are dangerous*," was the sententious reply.

In just an hour from that moment, at one o'clock, p. m., we were in marching order on the Fort Scott side of the stream. The passage consumed rather less time than was expected, in consequence of a number of the company swimming the swollen river, leaving their clothes to be transported by the boat. After crossing the river, which I did in the manner last stated, and while seated on the bank watching the little skiff in its frequent passages to and fro, I saw approaching in the last trip of the boat, a man whose



features, even at a distance, looked strangely familiar to me. He was dressed with an obvious desire for concealment. A large Spanish hat was slouched over his face, and the shawl in which he was enveloped was muffled close around him, but as he drew near something arrested his attention; he looked up and I caught his eye—that eye I should have known from a thousand—and I knew it was Capt. Montgomery. As Marshal Walker bore with him a writ for the arrest of Capt. Montgomery on charge of murder, it was deemed advisable by his friends for him to keep entirely from the presence of Walker, so that officer would not be under the unpleasant necessity of making any attempt at an arrest he plainly saw, in the existing state of feeling, would prove utterly impossible; but the daring, adventurous spirit of Montgomery could not brook the idea of an expedition performing a task of danger in which he shared not the peril, and hence in the disguise stated he joined the posse.

When within a short distance of the Fort, and while screened from observation by some timber, the command to halt was given, and final arrangements made for entering the place. After dividing the men into three divisions, and placing a responsible man at the head of each, Walker said he wanted six men who had revolvers, to volunteer to act as his special posse,

and if any of the men for whom he had writs, offered to make the least resistance, to shoot them down immediately on his giving the word. Six men, among whom were Capt. Montgomery, two or three of his devoted followers, the writer, etc., simultaneously stepped forward, and the march was renewed at a hurried step until we arrived at the town.

In obedience to orders, each division quickly performed its task. One company surrounded Sheriff Hill's house, another the Pro-Slavery hotel, and the third the house of the notorious Clarke. So unlooked for was our coming, and so silently and swiftly were all our arrangements perfected, that the first the astonished denizens knew of our whereabouts, we were directly in their midst. The villainous Hill, ever on the alert, saw us on a near approach, and with the exclamation, "D—— it, they've come," ran out of the town. Walker and his posse first proceeded to Hill's house and instituted a thorough search of the building from top to bottom. Not succeeding in finding him, they proceeded from there to the Pro-Slavery hotel, (McKay's,) and prosecuted a like unsuccessful search for the guilty men. At the hotel were quite a number of lady boarders, who manifested great alarm while the search was going on, until solemnly assured by Walker that not the slightest indignity or insult should be offered to them. At the hospital Dr. Carter

was arrested. His young wife was present, and plead for him with all the eloquence her woman nature was capable, asseverating time and again that her husband was innocent of the fearful crimes with which he was charged ; Walker assured her that her husband would have a fair, impartial trial, and if innocent, as for her sake he hoped he was, he would be so declared and liberated.

The house of the notorious Clarke was next visited, which had all the while been carefully guarded. The door was bolted, and on the refusal of its inmates to open it, Walker ordered the men to take the tongue out of a heavy camp-wagon standing in the square and burst the door open, which threat, before executed, brought the garrison to terms. Just as we were entering, however, word was brought to Marshal Walker that Clarke was standing on the steps of the Free State Hotel. Fearing that it was a ruse to draw him away from the scent of the villian, Walker took only his special posse, leaving the house strongly guarded.

The information, however, proved correct. On the first intimation of danger, Clarke fled by a secret passage to the Free State hotel, where he was received by the proprietor, whose professions of loyalty to the Free State cause, were afterwards received with little credit. Indeed the only thing Free State about it at

that time was its *name*, which the settlers afterwards dropped in speaking of it. On finding that he must inevitably be discovered, he came in front of the hotel, and began to make arrangements with his friends, from whom he had received encouragement of support, for a forcible resistance to the authority of Marshal Walker. Walker stepped up to him as he stood on the steps of the hotel, and handed him the writ against him, at the same time calling on him to submit himself to the law. This, after glancing over it, on pretence that the writ was informal, the villian refused to do. Again he was called upon to submit himself, and again, encouraged by his ruffian supporters around him, he defied arrest. The blood of Walker on seeing before him the murderer of his dearest friend in by-gone times, the martyred Barber, in a defiant attitude to the laws he had a hundred times outraged, was fearfully aroused. Stepping back a few paces, in a clear, ringing tone he gave the order for the whole posse to approach. "Form into a line and make ready," was his next coolly-uttered command. In an instant, almost, we stood, some thirty of us, in a line ready to fire at the word of our leader upon the bravado Clarke and his allies. It was a critical moment!—In front of us were Clarke and his ruffian supporters, all of whom were heavily armed, although some of them partially concealed their weapons ; and

in our rear, at the Pro-Slavery hotel, were at least a dozen of the same sort of gentry, all heavily armed with carbines and revolvers. In everything but numbers they were greatly our superiors. They were better armed than our men who had but few rifles, or revolvers, being mostly armed with old muskets and shot-guns ; and they had the advantage of position, having their houses to retreat into if needed, &c. When the men had formed into a line, Walker once more approached Clarke, and in a tone that carried conviction with it, said :—

“ Clarke, I can trifle with you no longer ! You know me, and you know that I never undertake anything but I go through with it, and this writ I hold in my hand must be executed, cost what it may to do it. Give yourself up this instant, or I will order my men to fire !”

Before the forming of the men into line, and the last resolute words of Walker, not a sign of backing-down, or yielding, did I see on the part of one of Clarke’s ruffian supporters. On the contrary, they commenced arming themselves more fully, despatching agents to the Fort for weapons, &c.; and more than once I heard Clarke told by these desperadoes not to submit himself and they would see him through. But the firmly spoken words of Marshal Walker, and the cool, determined manner in which our men wheeled



into line and boldly faced their foe, began to produce its effect. They saw that the posse was not to be deterred from its purpose by their bravado, and they began to tremble for the consequence. Some of the more timid soon commenced counseling Clarke to submit himself on condition that Sheriff Walker would allow him to be tried in Fort Scott. This Clarke at first would not hear to, but finding that the courage of his allies was fast oozing out, and that he would shortly be left with but few supporters, he made a *virtue of necessity*, and with an ill grace surrendered himself to the determined Walker, and was handed over to Marshal Smith, who already had Dr. Carter in custody, for safe keeping until a trial could be ordered. Hill ran towards the line until he found it guarded, when he returned and gave himself up to Marshal Smith.

When Marshal Walker first entered the town, he called on the citizens of the place to assist in the arrest of the murderers for whom he had writs, but not a man dared to obey the summons. There were a few who would have liked to have joined the posse, but prudence, and the fear of a mobbing by their fellow-townsmen, restrained them from so doing. Comment is unnecessary. The reader can judge for himself how much claim the citizens of Fort Scott at that time had to the title of law-abiding citizens, when the sum-



mons of a high official to assist him in maintaining the majesty of the law, was answered by having rifles and revolvers arrayed against him, and by having the murderer whom he is desirous of arresting, told *not to submit himself, and they would see him through.*

After leaving the town and getting about a mile on our homeward journey, we were overtaken by Marshals Smith and Walker, Marshal Walker having been detained in the town a short period after our departure. The object of Marshal Smith in following us we soon learned. Capt. Montgomery had been recognized in the Fort, and a writ for his arrest hastily executed, and placed in Sheriff Walker's hands for his immediate apprehension. Walker said he did not believe that the men comprising the posse would allow him to be taken from them, but he would do what he could in the discharge of his duty; and Marshal Smith, in his *newly awakened zeal* to see *writs executed*, had accompanied him to see if he faithfully fulfilled the obligations incumbent on him.

Marshal Walker took Montgomery a little apart from the men, and communicated to him the exact condition of things, closing by saying that it would be his unpleasant duty to attempt his arrest. Montgomery assured him that he would make no resistance to the majesty of the law—that he had never done anything for which he feared a trial before a jury of

his peers—and that he would cheerfully accompany him to Lecompton, &c.

They then returned to the posse, and briefly acquainting the company with the existence of the writ, Montgomery dispossessed himself of his weapons, handing his rifle to one, his revolvers to another, his hunting knife to a third, and quietly gave himself up a prisoner to Sheriff Walker. One murmur of indignation burst from the men, and short-lived would have been the arrest of Montgomery, had he not himself positively forbid their interference.

Marshal Smith had by this time approached the posse, and demanded in a pompous tone if Capt. Montgomery was present.

“I am that person,” said Montgomery, stepping forward so as to confront him, “your pleasure, sir.”

For a moment the assurance of the pompous Marshal forsook him, as his eyes fell before the penetrating gaze of the cool, self-possessed man before him ; but it was not his nature to be long impressed by worth, or nature’s nobility, and he shortly re-commenced, but in a slightly altered tone :—

“I have heard of you, (a bow from Montgomery). I have heard a great deal of bad about you, (another bow,) and I hope you have given yourself up in good faith, and will stand your trial as a law-abiding citizen should, and quietly acquiesce in the decision of the

court. You must be sensible you have done a great deal of mischief. Here in Fort Scott we are a law-loving and law-abiding people. I never was in a place where there was such peace, such quietude and sociability, and we are very sorry that you have plunged the country into such a distracted condition," etc.

It was amusing to watch the smile, half scorn, half contempt, that wreathed the lips of Montgomery during the above childish, fulsome discourse. A few days previous, while he and his company were quartered at Barnsville, a small frontier town, one of his scouts captured and brought into camp a deputy of this same Marshal Smith, who was en route for Le-compton, charged with important packages, missions, etc., to the Governor. These papers were unsealed and read by Montgomery. One of them was of a private character, and spoke of matters nearest the heart of the *great member* of the Smith family. After indulging in some fierce philippics against Capt. Montgomery, the worthy Marshal therein paid his respects to Fort Scott, after a very different fashion from that adopted in the conversation just narrated. He said to his Excellency, Gov. Denver, that he *was never in a place in his life where there was so much quarreling and wrangling—where there were so many cliques and factions as in Fort Scott—that if old Nick got nine-tenths of the inhabitants he would not then have his*

*due ; and unless there was a change in the place, he would be compelled to throw up his appointment, etc.*

Quite a number of the citizens of the town had by this time joined the posse, who had heard the flattering testimony of the Marshal, and for whose edification, it is fair to presume, it was chiefly delivered. If James Montgomery had been as some men, how completely could he have turned the tables on the pompous Marshal. A few words (which no one could better have expressed had he chosen to do so) convincing the Marshal that he was aware of the contents of the intercepted letter previously alluded to, and stating its character to the collected audience, would not only have covered the pompous Marshal with confusion, but would have thrown a fire-brand in Fort Scott that, in all probability, would only have ended in the expulsion of that *official* from his office, in far less time than he hinted at withdrawing therefrom in his letter to the Governor.

Most men in such a situation would have made some such reply, but there was too much magnanimity and greatness of soul in Montgomery to recriminate on the cringing, time-serving, apology for a man before him, even when circumstances had placed him so completely at his mercy. Like the falcon that disdains to fly at ignoble game, he allowed him to take his departure without showing up his duplicity, which

forbearance, while I wondered at it, could not but exalt him in my estimation.

We returned to the Marmaton about dusk that evening, and recrossed it in the same manner we crossed over in the morning. The night was dark, and threatened storm, and the members of the posse living on the Osage gladly availed themselves of the invitations of their Marmaton friends, to remain with them over night ; as, in the darkness that enveloped the prairies, it would be almost impossible to reach Raysville before morning, if we undertook the journey. Six of us went to the cabin-home of Griffith. The storm broke before reaching his dwelling, and we were all completely drenched by the time we arrived and had lariatied our horses for the night. A good fire was burning on the wide open hearth, and after sitting by it awhile, supper was announced, which, when eaten with gusto that only hungry men can eat, completed our satisfaction. I asked the lady-like hostess if she did not feel almost like leaving Kansas, inundated as they so frequently were with such parties of hungry men as ourselves, and she made reply, "that she considered it a *privilege* rather than a trouble to minister to the wants of the defenders of Kansas."

There was but one room in the house, but every thing in it looked neat and comfortable, and there



were many little articles scattered around, that denoted the cultivated tastes of the whilom College professor and his wife. She inquired of her husband the particulars of the day's expedition, and took as much interest in the whole matter as any one concerned therein. Her husband, from being a correspondent of the Lawrence papers, had rendered himself obnoxious to the Fort gentry, and had several times been warned that if he did not stop his communications concerning their doings, they would find a way to stop them themselves ; and that day in the Fort he had again been threatened with the most fearful consequences if he did not instantly cease his communications. This fact he communicated to his wife, and said that perhaps he had better suspend them for a period, until the excitement died somewhat away, lest the ruffians should some time in his absence wreak their vengeance on his family.

“No, no !” said the wife, “*continue to do your duty as a man ; strike boldly and spare not ; be not deterred by fears on my account from doing what your conscience tells you is right you should do. I would rather a hundred times lose my life than that you should ever hesitate a moment, publicly or privately, in expressing your honest sentiments.*”

When the time for retiring arrived, we wrapped ourselves in our blankets, which we had dried by the



fire, and consigned ourselves to slumber on some covers which had been spread on the floor for our accommodation. The storm still continued to spend its rage ; the heavy roll of thunder could be heard, and the wind swept through the forest trees that surrounded the dwelling with almost the rush and roar of a tornado. We were too weary, however, to be kept awake long by the warring of the elements, and soon slumber, heavy and dead, rested on all the occupants of the house.

When we awoke in the morning it was almost sunrise. One of the little party went out to look after our horses, and soon returned with the alarming intelligence that four of the six horses had broken loose, and were no where to be seen. The storm in the night had alarmed them, and in the frantic circuits of their tethers, they had snapped their cords and galloped off. Six youths were seldom in a much greater dilemma. We were at least twelve miles from the Osage, and there was not much prospect of finding our horses before getting there, and a foot tramp the whole distance seemed almost inevitable. After eating a hearty breakfast and thanking our hosts for their kindness, we started for the Osage, piling what saddles we could on the horses remaining to the party, and putting the rest with forced resignation on our shoulders. In this manner, more ludicrous than

pleasant, we journeyed some two or three miles, when we met a small party of our friends with our run-away horses, which they had fortunately found, and were returning to us. It appeared that our horses, instead of going home as we expected, had strayed to the farm-house where our friends were stopping, and who, knowing them to belong to our party, had hastened to secure them and bring them to us. Our spirits revived at the welcome sight of our truant steeds, and we lost no time in transferring the saddles from our backs to the backs of our horses, and mounting thereon, resumed our journey with our companions. At Mill Creek, a stream about half way between the Marmaton and the Osage, we fell in company with Walker and the residue of the posse residing on the Little Osage, and we all rode on together until we arrived at Raysville, which place we reached about 11 o'clock, a. m.

Shortly after our arrival, Capt. Bayne, McCannon, and their associates, came slowly riding in the town, their jaded horses seeming scarcely able to support the weight of their riders. They were in fine spirits, however, and their accounts of their adventures were thrilling and interesting. Their night-ride, owing to the storm and darkness, was slow and tedious, and more than once they became so bewildered they had to stop entirely, while the guides sought out the lost trail,

but by day-light they had gained the desired position in the heart of a dense timber-land, contiguous to the border, where they secreted themselves close to the road leading from Fort Scott to the Missouri line. Quite a number passed along in the course of the day, all of whom were closely scrutinized by the stern troopers as they lay in their place of concealment ; and if anything suspicious was detected in their appearance, they were instantly subjected to the closest investigation. The sun had passed its meridian when an elderly gentleman came riding along in a one-horse buggy, at an easy pace, as if neither man nor steed was in a hurry to arrive at its destination. It was Judge Williams of Fort Scott. The worthy Judge had by some means learned of Marshal Walker's proposed visit to the Fort, and in order to escape any unpleasant occurrence that might happen, during the stay of that official, he concluded to make a visit to Missouri, and was just upon the point of executing his intention when introduced to the reader. Suddenly the worthy Judge's musings were interrupted in a manner as peculiar as unexpected. His horse's bridle reins were grasped by a strong hand, and two or three armed men pressed around the vehicle, arresting the further progress of both steed and traveler. Surprise for a moment kept the *worthy* Judge speechless, but recovering himself, he said in a voice in which there was an amusing blending of *terror* and judicial dignity :—

“Why, boys, don’t you know me? Don’t any of you know me? Isn’t there any one here that knows me? Why, I am Judge Williams of Fort Scott, of the 3d judicial district! I tell you I am—”

Here the worthy Judge was interrupted by young McCannon, who told him he was well aware that he was Judge Williams of Fort Scott, and that was just the reason they had stopped him. Capt. Bayne, who had all the time been secreted behind some bushes, was so amused with the ludicrous terror of the Judge, that at this point he could no longer contain himself, and burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. At the sound of Bayne’s merriment, Williams straightened himself up in his buggy, and peering into the timber in the direction of the sound, said :

“Is not that Capt. Bayne?”

Bayne finding that he was recognized, came forward and said, “Yes, Judge Williams, it is he whom you are now pleased to call *Capt. Bayne*, but when we last met face to face, which was last winter in Fort Scott, it was then that *poor devil* Bayne on the Osage. Follow me, Judge Williams, I would speak with you apart.”

Bayne led the way to a lonely place some two or three hundred yards from his men, when he halted and motioned to the Judge who had followed with trembling steps, to pause. What the tenor of the *worthy*

Judge's thoughts were, may be inferred from the first question he asked in a trembling, pleading voice :

" You are not going to murder me, are you, Capt. Bayne ?"

" No, Judge Williams, I seek not your blood !— You have wronged me as deeply as a man can wrong his fellow-man—done it without cause or provocation—but your life is safe in my hands to-day. What I want with you is to say to you a few plain words. You are a scholar, Judge Williams, and I am a poor, unlettered Irishman, but my feelings, my instincts, my natural privileges are the same as yours. Last winter I came before your court a suer for justice. I was one of the old settlers of Kansas. My claim was jumped by a new-comer—a Missourian. I came to you for justice, Judge Williams ! In the face of the law, in the face of the evidence, you decided against me ; the settler of years was displaced for the settler of hours. But with the strong arm we *reversed* your decision on the Osage, Judge Williams ! I drove off the intruder, and defied the verdict opposed to law, and opposed to reason. Now listen to my words !— You are a learned man, and you must know so simple a fact, that if there are no *Marshals* there can be no *arrests*, and if there are no *Judges* there can be no *sentences*. I am not a lawless man ; honest laws, honestly administered, I would respect ; but if we are



to have laws expounded as they have been expounded the past twelve-months in your circuit court, we had infinitely better have no Marshals and no Judges in Kansas. So be warned in time, Judge Williams !”

They retraced their steps to the vehicle, in which the Judge re-seated himself, and grasping the reins with trembling hand, drove off. So shaken were the nerves of the *worthy* Judge, however, that it took several days’ rest in Missouri to restore his nervous system sufficiently to allow of his return to Fort Scott ; and to the latest hour of his life, I doubt not, Judge Williams will retain a lively recollection of his interview with Capt. Bayne in the wilderness.

Agreeable to an understanding between the posse of Walker and the little force of Bayne, there was to have been a messenger sent from the Fort to notify Bayne and his company of the probable period of our departure, but in the hurry and confusion of the moment it was forgotten, and the little band waited hour after hour in expectation of a summons to leave the dangerous position they occupied. None arriving, however, they left their position just before nightfall, and rode to the crossing of the Marmaton, which to their consternation they found so swollen that to cross it at that late hour of the night, by swimming their horses, would be highly dangerous, if not wholly impossible. They rode up and down the river for some



time, seeking a fordable place, and at last, despairing of effecting their object, they retired to a ravine of dense timber, and encamped for the night. Had the gentry at the Fort known of their close vicinage, they would have fared but poorly, but as it was, their slumbers were undisturbed. In the morning the hardy troopers were early astir, and the Marmaton by that time having slightly fallen, they crossed it with some difficulty, and arrived finally at Raysville at the time and in the manner stated.

Towards evening a runner from the Marmaton brought word that the murderers arrested in Fort Scott the day previous, had been released from custody, and were running the streets of the town, without even having been subjected to the farce of a trial.—The intelligence created an intense excitement in Raysville, and a messenger was instantly despatched to Sheriff Walker, who had gone on to Moneka, a town some twelve miles north of Raysville, to acquaint him with the facts of the case. As soon as Walker learned that Marshal Smith and the civil authorities of the Fort had thus grossly violated their pledges; with the high sense of honor innate in him, he told Montgomery not to consider himself under arrest longer; that as the Fort Scott people had broken their faith, he would break his, and that he was at liberty to stay and *fight* it out with them, &c.

Montgomery, thus released from custody, returned to the Osage, and Sheriff Walker pursued his journey north to Lecompton. On arriving there he made a frank acknowledgment to the Governor, of his releasing Montgomery, and although slightly censured, was not otherwise dealt with for his conduct.

## CHAPTER XII.

CAPT. JAMES MONTGOMERY.

“ Our band is few, but true and tried,  
Our leader frank and bold ;  
The British soldier trembles  
When Marion’s name is told.  
Grave men there are by broad Santee,  
Grave men with hoary hairs,  
Their hearts are all with Marion,  
For Marion are their prayers.”

BRYANT.

I now approach a task, for the accomplishment of which this book was chiefly commenced, and which, as page after page has left my hands, has grown in moment and magnitude as I have slowly drawn nearer to it. That task is the vindication of James Montgomery from some of the many calumnies that have, at various times, assailed his noble character, by a brief and truthful history of the more important events of his public and private life. The sources from whence I have derived the biography I shall lay before the reader are various ; but nothing will be

stated of which the writer has not satisfied himself of its truthfulness, or is unable to prove to the skeptical beyond the shadow of a doubt or cavil.

James Montgomery is of Scotch descent. His ancestry dates back to the time of the second Pretender to the throne of Scotland, when James Montgomery, a lineal ancestor of the present bearer of that name, was a Highland Chieftain, the head of a numerous Clan devotedly attached to the cause of the Pretender. When that unfortunate Prince failed in his ill-starred enterprise, and was forced to flee the kingdom, the Chieftain of the Clan of Montgomery, to avoid the fate of the leaders of the rebellion, who were in numbers condemned and executed by the government, made his escape to Ireland, where he was shortly after joined by his brother and their families. The younger brother remained in Ireland until his death; but James, in a few years, immigrated to America, where he lived the remainder of his life. The subject of this biography is a great grandson of the elder brother, and Gen. Richard Montgomery, who fell before Quebec, was a son of the younger brother, residing in Ireland.

James Montgomery was born in Ohio, in 1813, but his parents, shortly after his birth, removing to Kentucky, he was educated and reared in the latter state. It was there, in the "Land of Boone," while a youth;

roaming the forests in pursuit of game, which even at that time amply repaid the toils of the chase, that Montgomery exercised and developed those powers for which he has, in later life, become so remarkable, and which enabled him to fulfill the important mission he so successfully accomplished. He was of a religious cast of mind in early life, and when quite youthful, joined the Campbellite church, in which religious denomination, after arriving at manhood, he was a regularly appointed minister. Shortly after attaining his majority, he married the daughter of a slave-holder, by whom he had several children. He resided in Kentucky until the passage of the Kansas and Nebraska bill, when he removed to Western Missouri, and as soon as Kansas was opened to emigrants, crossed over into the Territory, and was thus one of the first settlers in the disputed land of Kansas.

He was at that time a peace man in the strictest sense of the term, and continued to exercise the duties of his sacred calling whenever an opportunity offered in which they could be employed in the sparsely settled neighborhood in which he resided. He was, however, in favor of making Kansas a Free State, not only on account of his children, whom he wished to educate and bring up where they would not be surrounded by the influences necessarily accompanying the introduction of Slavery; but from the higher and

more unselfish desire of seeing the rich and beautiful soil of Kansas uncursed by the existence of that institution, which from long and intimate association with its features, he had learned to regard as both a moral and political evil. He settled in Linn Co., on the head of Little Sugar Creek, a tributary of the Marais des Cygnes, on a beautifully situated tract of land, partly timber and partly prairie. Linn Co., at that time, 1855, was but thinly settled, and the dominant element was strongly pro-slavery. Late in the fall of 1855 there was a county meeting of the citizens of Linn Co., at the small grocery at Sugar Mound, to nominate candidates for county and Territorial offices.

The day before the meeting Montgomery went to Missouri after some provisions for his family, and on his return he was overtaken by a severe storm of snow and hail, and night setting in when he was several miles from home, he became bewildered on the prairie, and did not reach home until nearly midnight, and then in consequence of his being illy-prepared for such a sudden change in the weather, he was so benumbed with cold that he could scarcely walk from the wagon to the house. His ears and portions of his face were badly frozen, and it was months before he could wear anything but loose moccasins upon his feet. So great, however, was his anxiety to attend the meeting alluded to, that notwithstanding his disabled condition, he



mounted a horse the next morning, and arrived at the Mound just as the assembled settlers were proceeding to an organization of the meeting. His arrival was opportune. Already the leaders of the Pro-Slavery party had arranged their plans, decided on their candidates, etc., and were waiting but the mere form of an organization to complete their already concerted arrangements. The appearance of Montgomery disconcerted them for a moment, but confident in their superiority of numbers over the comparatively trifling Free State element assembled, they concluded they would endeavor to disarm his power to destroy their plans, by connecting him with the proceedings, and accordingly elected him secretary of the meeting. As soon as the nominations were made, Col. Fox and the leaders of the Pro-Slavery party, in pursuance with their preconcerted policy, moved and urged an immediate ballot without adopting any resolutions, or pledging the candidates to any principles or measures.

This plan of procedure was about being adopted by the meeting, when Montgomery, who had seen through the designs of the leaders of the meeting, arose and respectfully but firmly expressed his disapprobation of the course proposed for the action of the meeting, at the same time stating the grounds on which his opposition was based. He said he opposed the motion

before the meeting for several reasons. In the first place the nominations for the various offices appeared as though they had been prepared for the occasion ; he did not say they were, but they certainly bore that appearance, and the haste manifested by some of the meeting to proceed to balloting, almost reduced the suspicion to a certainty. Such a procedure was anti-republican, and he was sure his hearers would, on second thought, object to its adoption. But this was but the least part of his objections to the motion. He was directly opposed to selecting any candidates at a meeting of this character, no matter how nominated, until they came forward and fairly and fully defined their positions, showing how they stood on the great questions of the day, etc., so that the meeting might ballot for the various candidates presented intelligently. Unless this was done, what security had the freemen of Linn Co. that the principles of freedom, which he doubted not all before him cherished as the noblest heritage bequeathed them by their revolutionary sires, would be safe when entrusted in the hands of unpledged and uncommitted candidates ? The eyes of the civilized world were turned to Kansas, in the expectation of seeing her hardy sons with one accord dedicate her soil to freedom, and the freemen of Linn Co. he was sure would not be backward in contributing their share towards forwarding the great enterprise.

This was the substance in rough of Montgomery's remarks, who after commencing, continued to expatiate on the subject until he saw the rude settlers, many of whom had been drinking pretty freely, were properly touched by his appeal to their feelings, and had become sufficiently patriotic, when he sat down amid the boisterous applause of the greater part of the meeting. He had scarcely taken his seat, when he was followed by a speaker who advocated the same kind of sentiments, who was in turn succeeded by another settler favoring the same principles ; and so the thing went on, one speaker following another, all gaining courage from the noble stand taken by Montgomery, and advocating the same views ; until even Fox himself, the leader of the Pro-Slavery party, despairing of otherwise receiving a nomination from the meeting, reluctantly mounted the stand, and proclaimed himself in favor of making Kansas a Free-State, to the complete repudiation of his former principles. This was the first triumph of Montgomery over the enemies of freedom in Kansas ; it made him many bitter foes, but it endeared him to the then few Free State men of that portion of the Territory, and to this day, the old settlers treasure a lively remembrance of how Montgomery made a *Free State man* of old Fox against his will.

The year of '56 was tolerably quiet until Gen. Clarke

invaded the Territory in October with three hundred men, making Linn and Bourbon Counties the theatre of his depredations. He was accompanied by the Col. Fox hitherto alluded to, who acted as a sort of an aid-de-camp to the notorious Clarke while in the Territory. The grocery at Sugar Mound was burned, as was also a number of other buildings, and a large number of settlers were taken prisoners, and forced to accompany the expedition to Missouri, from whence many of them never returned. Remembering the active exertions of Montgomery the fall before to promote the cause of freedom, Fox inflamed the mind of the ruffian Clarke with the desire to possess himself of such a dangerous person, and induced him to despatch a detachment of men to take him a prisoner. The ruffians surrounded the house, and finding that the object of their search was absent, fired the building, and left shelterless on the prairies, the wife and children of him whose life they sought, for no other crime than that he preferred *freedom* to *slavery*. The next day he boldly presented himself in their camp at the Mound, and demanded justice of Clarke for the wrongs done him by his followers. He was unarmed, and confronted Clarke at his head-quarters, which was for the time being in an old log house at the east end of the Mound, owned by a Free State settler by the name of Barnes.

Surprise for a moment kept the ruffian Gen. speechless, and when he recovered from his amazement at the boldness of the unarmed man before him, in thus recklessly placing himself in his power, he gave an insolent refusal to his request, and ordered his men standing around to seize on him and place him in custody immediately. Several sprang forward to obey the summons, but they had illy reckoned on the character of the man before them. Throwing off their holds as though their grasps were the grasps of children, he darted for a stone wall some thirty or forty yards distant, which having gained, he bounded over into a strip of standing corn, and hastened in the direction of the timber bordering on Little Sugar. As soon as Clarke saw that Montgomery had torn himself from his men, he gave them the command to fire ; but before the ruffians could get their arms in readiness, their intended victim had gained the shelter of the corn, and Clarke seeing that he was likely to make his escape, in a burst of uncontrollable rage, turned to his men, and with a savage oath exclaimed :—

“Follow that man, and bring him to my presence, dead or alive, before you return !”

Scores started in pursuit eager for blood, but by the time they gained the timber, Montgomery had secreted himself in one of the many lurking places familiar to him, from many a hunt through its solitudes,

and although the human blood-hounds frequently passed so near his place of concealment that he might have touched them by extending his hand, he escaped undiscovered, and under shelter of night he left his dangerous retreat, and made his way to where he would be less likely to fall into the clutches of the enemy. Day after day did Clarke and his allies scour the country for Montgomery, who was forced to make the wilderness his home, where he was not even secure, but was dogged from thicket to thicket by the enemies of freedom, who thirsted for his blood. Who can tell the thoughts of the future Hero of Southern Kansas while thus pursued with such unrelenting hostility by the human blood-hounds in whose hands he was liable at any moment to fall ; with the full knowledge of this, and the stunning consciousness of the terrible wrongs practiced on his wife and children seething through his brain ! O, if the faith of the Christian and the minister in the blessed teachings of *Him* who *died* that men should *live*, was in aught shaken as regarded its applicability to present time, by the unprovoked persecution he then suffered ; and the reader of the after-life of Montgomery is shocked by its contrast with the former, which seems to exhibit a departure from the faith of his earlier life ; let him think of the provocation greater far than I have told, which converted the *spiritual soldier* into the *temporal warrior*.



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Time passed on, and the enemies of Kansas were still busy in meditating the overthrow of the rising power of freedom in the Territory. During the early part of the year of '57 the Southern part of the Territory was comparatively quiet, but early in the fall difficulties of a serious character were once more commenced. A Pro-Slavery aristocracy had ruled Linn Co. as with a rod of iron, from its earliest settlement ; and had grown more arrogant as time wore on, and their power to retain the control of county affairs, save by trickery, and brow-beating the majority of the settlers, became more and more doubtful. Paris, the county seat of Linn, was the head-quarters of this ruling aristocracy, and having the court and county machinery in their own hands, their power to disturb and harass the Free State settlers was almost unlimited. Col. Fox, Capt. Hamilton, the Davis's, &c., were the leaders of this aristocratic element ; but there were a number of others, of scarcely less note, who participated in the obtaining of the spoils derived in a legal manner, or from forays upon the weaker party ; and had thus made themselves equally obnoxious to the well-disposed and quietly enduring citizens of the Territory. Some of the enormities committed by this reigning aristocracy, aided and abetted by their Missouri allies, are almost incredible of belief, and nothing but their uncontrovertible authentication by scores

and scores of the old settlers of the Territory could induce me to credit some of the heart-rending narrations on annal, or existing in fire-side tradition.

Montgomery, from his retirement, saw it all. He saw every Free State man of note either driven from or harassed into leaving the county. He saw them deliberately plundered of cattle, horses, goods and crops ; in many instances their cabins burned, and outrages committed of such atrocity that even decency forbids their mention. He saw the guilty parties grow rich and strong in a night on property thus pilaged from his Free State neighbors. He saw all attempts at redress by law scouted at or thwarted. A wink, or a nod, or a gesture from one of the parties, to the jury, indicating that he was a member of their secret fraternity, invariably gained him the suit. Important witnesses that would make the cases too glaring and flagrant if allowed to appear, were intimidated, or made criminals, or in some manner prevented from giving testimony which must perforce have convicted the guilty actors.

For a long time, Montgomery and others patiently waited for a redress by law of all their abuses, and probably would have waited longer had they seen any signs of justice assuming the sceptre of command ; but things daily continuing to grow worse, he at last obeyed the calls of an injured people, and summoning

a few of his neighbors together, he enrolled them in a company styled the "Self-Protective Company," and took the field to check some of the gigantic evils that had crept into the politics and legal code of the county. He first bound each member of the company to the faithful observance of certain rules and regulations, making as a penalty for a non-compliance with them an immediate expulsion from his company.—These regulations having already been given to the reader from the lips of Montgomery himself, need not be here repeated. A policy of action was then agreed upon, which was strictly carried out. Every man of influence in Linn Co., who sustained the Blue Lodge in its secret machinations, and upheld the bogus code and the Pro-Slavery Lecompton government, whether by fraud, violence, or murder, was warned to leave the Territory in a certain time and take with him his property. Some left, and some refused to go. Those who did not leave within the specified time were visited again, when their houses were searched, and arms, ammunition, horses, &c., taken from them. In no case, however, was the house of a Pro-Slavery man burned, or his property wantonly destroyed by Montgomery and his men. The ejected occupant had full permission to sell, or transfer his property in any way he chose, no restraint whatever being imposed on his actions.

This bold and decided course on the part of the Free State men had the desired effect ; peace was for the time being secured, and Montgomery returned to his home. So universally approved of, however, was his course by the settlers, from whose necks he had lifted the galling yoke they had so long worn, that they would at any time have responded en mass to any call he might have made on their time and services.

In the month of December, 1857, he was sent for by the settlers of the Osage in Bourbon Co., to come and assist them in extricating themselves from the difficulties in which they were involved. Before proceeding further it will be necessary for me to give a brief synopsis of the state and condition of things in Bourbon Co. at the time of the dispatch of this message to Montgomery.

In the summer of 1856, Gen. Clarke and his men left Fort Scott, where they were at the time staying, and marched up into the northern part of the county, laying waste every thing belonging to the Free State men, nearly all of whom had to flee for their lives, taking with them only such property as they could hastily gather together, but in most cases they were not allowed anything but a team to carry them out of the county. The claims on the Little Osage being very valuable on account of the splendid timber bor-

dering on the stream, were immediately transferred to the invading party, or their friends, with all the cattle, swine, and other property left behind. During the year of '57 many of those who were driven off, returned, when, as might be expected, great difficulty occurred. Those having fraudulent possession of these valuable claims, refused to give them up, and those to whom the respective property rightfully belonged, expressed their full determination to possess themselves of them if possible. Some, after great difficulty succeeded, but the great majority were doomed to see their property and stock, bearing their own private marks, appropriated by these usurpers, and when they made any attempts to resist such unjust and unlawful appropriations, they were summoned to Fort Scott, the county seat of Bourbon Co., where they were subjected to vexatious annoyances, excessive costs, etc., which reduced numbers from comfortable circumstances to a state of want and misery. One of the most notorious of many cases, is, in brief, as follows :

A Mr. Stone was forced to leave his claim in the summer of '56. It was shortly after taken possession of by a man from Missouri, commonly known as "Old Preacher Southwood," he having purchased it of one of Clarke's ruffian followers. In the spring of '57, Mr. Stone returned and demanded possession. This was refused. Mr. Stone then erected another cabin so near

to his first habitation, that his family procured their water from the same well which he had formerly dug. This small favor was so grudgingly allowed by the Southwood family, that finally they refused to grant the trivial act of naked justice longer, and on a certain occasion Mrs. Southwood attacked Mrs. Stone while at the well, knocked her down with a hand-spike, and dangerously beat her. About this time a number of Free State settlers returned and began to gather up their stock, hogs, etc. As this had all been appropriated, and the greater part of it sold, the present owners refused to yield up their claim to it. The real owners feeling themselves strong in the right, took it. They also armed themselves in a body and went to those who occupied claims formerly belonging to Free State men, and ordered them to leave the county; "Old Preacher Southwood" among the number.—Those warned from the claims which they illegally occupied, immediately left and went to Fort Scott, where they made complaints before the Grand Jury of those men who had warned them off, and had all whom they could identify arrested under the rebellion act, one of the enactments of the bogus legislature.

Others were arrested for stealing cattle, hogs, etc., and others again for secreting them—and so a long string of indictments and bills were prepared for persecutions and trials, similar to those lodged against the Free State men in '55-6, at Lecompton.



These acts of glaring injustice finally became so grievous that the settlers could endure them no longer, and commenced resistance to the court at Fort Scott, which, under the regime of Judge Williams, had become a second edition of that under the infamous Lecompt. To correct these abuses and right themselves, the settlers of the Osage established a "Squatter Court," before which they tried all men who had in any manner interfered to harass them in past time. This court was established in December, and it was to assist in its support that Montgomery was sent for. The heads of the court were Major Abbott, Dr. G——, etc. Before this court several were tried and fined. In every instance they were required to make full restitution for every thing unlawfully obtained from the original owners.

When the news of this *fresh rebellion* of the settlers of the Osage reached Fort Scott, it excited in the breasts of that *law and order* people the deepest indignation. A formidable posse was immediately raised by deputy U. S. Marshal Little, to crush at once the incipient rebellion to the laws of the Territory as expounded by Judge Williams. On the 15th of December, while Major Abbott, Dr. G——, and others, were holding Citizen's Court, they were informed that a force of about one hundred and fifty men were going to attack them the next day unless they dispersed in

the interim. On receiving this information, the heads of the court sent a messenger to Marshal Little, with the reply that they would disperse only on condition that the officials of the Fort would return to them all the warrants issued against the Free State men under the bogus Rebellion Act. No reply was made to this message, but the next day, while the court were awaiting the news from Fort Scott, their scouts, a dozen in number, came into camp, having been run from Barnsville, a town some eight or ten miles from the Fort, so rapidly by Marshal Little and his posse, that three of their number were taken prisoners. The Marshal, and his posse of about seventy men all mounted, soon after the arrival of the scouts, made their appearance, and a deputation, appointed by the assembled settlers, went out to parley with the valorous Marshal. His adhered-to demand was that they should surrender unconditionally, and go to Fort Scott to be tried for treason. These disgraceful terms were spurned by the settlers, to whom half an hour was given to make up their minds. Although the posse of Marshal Little was double in number the little assemblage of settlers, they resolved not to be taken alive, and when the half hour expired sent word to the Marshal that they would disperse if allowed, but would not be taken prisoners. The valiant Marshal, on receiving this word, without giving them time to leave the building,

charged with his men upon them, saying that they "*would blow them to h——!*"

The court was held in a log building, which had been converted into a tolerable Fort, being furnished with loop-holes, etc. The attack was commenced in three divisions, on the right, the left, and front of the settlers. As they came up to the Fort, the squatters opened upon them a steady and destructive fire. The battle lasted about fifteen minutes, at the expiration of which time the Marshal and his men dispersed in every direction. Marshal Little was slightly wounded, one of his men was mortally, and two others were badly wounded. Several horses were also shot. The loss of the Free State men was none, and but one man wounded.

In all of the proceedings that occurred at the time of which I write, Montgomery bore an honorable part ; and in a short time after his arrival on the Osage, his judgment, courage, and deadly skill with fire-arms, became so proverbial, that he was at once assigned the difficult post of leader, and implicit confidence reposed in his actions. Nor was that confidence misplaced. Few men could have filled the place Montgomery filled, or done aught approaching what he so thoroughly accomplished. There were powerful enemies on all sides to contend against. After the skirmish between Marshal Little and the settlers of the

Osage, a feud, of even greater animosity than formerly existed, sprung up between Fort Scott and the citizens of Bourbon Co. The troops garrisoning the Fort joined in with the citizens of the town in their schemes of petty annoyances, and horse stealings, house burnings, and midnight assassinations, were of common occurrence. The ruffians of the border were powerful allies of the Fort gentry, and were leagued in with them in all their marauding expeditions. Besides these enemies of Kansas, there was the Pro-Slavery element still existing in the county, which was ready at any moment to operate with the ruffians of the Fort, or their allies in Missouri. The position of Montgomery was thus one of great difficulty to properly fill, and it was rendered still more embarrassing by the varied character of the men he commanded, many of whom had been deeply wronged in some manner by their oppressors, and were with difficulty restrained from committing acts in retaliation unjustifiable in themselves, and impolitic in consequence. But the genius of Montgomery overcame all opposing difficulties. He thoroughly drilled the men composing his company, and having bound them to the faithful observance of the same regulations that had governed the companies which he had previously commanded, he commenced a similar plan of operations to that which he had hitherto so successfully adopted in other localities.

A list of the names of the principal Pro-Slavery men residing on claims belonging to the Free State settlers was made out, all of whom were visited and warned to leave the Territory within a certain period. The character of Montgomery had preceded him, and with a few exceptions, all who were visited obeyed the unwelcome summons within the time specified. Those who did not leave were again visited and summarily ejected from the premises they illegally occupied. In all cases, however, the property rightfully belonging to them was respected, and they were allowed to dispose of it, or convey it with them, as suited their pleasure. After righting the settlers on the Little Osage, Montgomery proceeded to the Marmaton, a stream a few miles north of Fort Scott, where the settlers were suffering under wrongs almost as grievous as those which oppressed the dwellers of the Little Osage before their troubles were removed. On arriving at the Marmaton, he at once stated his object, and had the satisfaction of seeing the men who had wrongfully usurped claims, abandon them without any further proceedings being instituted against them.

About this time a number of arrests were made by Marshal Little of the settlers of the Little Osage, for whom he held writs charging them with firing on him when he came to arrest the members of the squatter's court held in Fort Bayne. He had all the troops of

the Fort with him acting as his posse, and although the settlers were highly indignant at the high-handed outrage, they were powerless to interfere, and the prisoners were marched off to Fort Scott. There were six Free State men taken. Among them was young McCannon, before alluded to. After being confined for weeks, and languishing under the miserable fare and impure air of their prison, McCannon succeeded in working a hole through the wall with a pocket-knife at intervals when unperceived by the jailor, and one dark night he and all his companions, with one exception, fled the jail and made their escape. The individual who refused to liberate himself, was an old settler by the name of Beason, who remained and demanded an examination, which was finally granted. No evidence of consequence appearing to implicate him in the fight of Fort Bayne, he was released from custody. After restoring the settlers of the Marmaton to the claims from which they had been so long defrauded, Montgomery returned to the Little Osage, and established himself at Raysville, which place he made his head quarters while in Bourbon Co. His boldly conceived and successfully executed line of policy had inspired such terror in the hearts of the olden oppressors of the settlers, that for a period peace seemed to reign, and in the course of a few weeks he returned to his home, followed by the thanks of the set-



tlers. And indeed they had reason to be grateful.—Without reward, and at an expense he could illy afford, he acted in their defense, simply from the impulses of a brave and generous nature. His influence, also, on the rude but well-meaning men by whom he was surrounded, was highly beneficial. A religious man, of simple habits and kind disposition, no selfish considerations could swerve him from the path of duty, and his followers, who looked up to him with a respect almost bordering on idolatry, sought to emulate his virtues.

I now come to speak of an action in the public life of Montgomery which more than any, or all others, has been quoted and harped on by his enemies whenever they have wished to create an unfavorable opinion against him ; and which has even been suppressed, or glossed over by some of his well-meaning, but ill-judging friends, as something indefensible. I allude to his destruction of the ballot-box at Sugar Mound, January 4th, 1858. The facts of the case are simply as follows :

The reader of Kansas history is well aware of the fact that when acting Gov. Stanton in '57 convened the Territorial Legislature, it provided for an election of the qualified voters of the Territory on the 4th of January, 1858, to obtain the expression of the settlers on the infamous Lecompton Constitution, which they

were then in danger of having thrust upon them. This power to record their ballots against the obnoxious Lecompton Constitution was earnestly desired by at least nine-tenths of the inhabitants of the Territory, but on the policy of voting for State officers under the Lecompton instrument, there was a great diversity of sentiment. The Topekaites opposed the participation of the Free State party in State or Territorial politics on principle ; rebuke, said they, the infamous Lecompton Constitution with your ballots, but don't sanction it by voting for State officers under it : while the Brown, or conservative element of the party, favored the voting policy, urging as their reason for so doing that they could thereby get the Territorial machinery in their own hands, which would prove a valuable auxiliary to the Free State party in case the Lecompton Constitution was foisted upon them in defiance to the expressed will of the majority.

In fact, such a diversity of opinion existed, that it was deemed best to call a delegate Convention to take the matter into consideration, and a call was accordingly issued for a Territorial Convention to convene at Lawrence the 23d of Dec., to council the propriety of nominating a state ticket for their support at the coming election. The Convention met, and, after a thorough interchange of sentiment, and a protracted session of several days, finally decided by a small ma-

jority not to go into an election for State officers. The evening meeting of the last day the majority report was read and adopted. One of the resolutions adopted was as follows :

“Whereas, The apportionment for members of the Legislature under the Lecompton Constitution does recognize and legalize the fraudulent vote cast at the precinct of Oxford, in the County of Johnson, and in other respects is utterly unfair and unjust, giving the border counties an undue preponderance over the rest of the Territory ; and, whereas, a test oath is required of all challenged voters ; and, whereas, we have no confidence whatever in the fairness nor honesty of the officer to whom the returns are finally to be made ; and, whereas, the Constitution itself under which the election of January 4th is to be held, is not the choice of the people of Kansas.

Therefore, *Resolved*, That the Free State party of Kansas will not participate in said election.”

When the decision of the Convention was finally declared, quite a number of delegates bolted from the meeting, and, led by G. W. Brown, editor of the *Herald of Freedom*, met in his office and put in nomination a ticket which they headed the “Anti-Usurpation ticket,” after which they adjourned. This procedure on the part of the bolters from the Convention was not in itself so reprehensible, as the manner

in which they conducted the campaign during the brief period that intervened between the Convention and the day of the election. The inhabitable portion of the Territory was sown with tickets, and copies of an extra from the office of the "*Herald of Freedom*" containing garbled accounts of the proceedings of the Convention, and conveying the idea that the people of Kansas, speaking through their delegates, had decided to vote for State officers the coming election.

This deceived a large number of voters residing in remote portions of the Territory unrepresented at the Convention, and depending entirely on the Lawrence papers for accounts of its proceedings. The great majority of the settlers who had in times past rallied around the Topeka Constitution, would have preferred not participating in the election of State officers, but considered themselves bound to acquiesce in the decision of the Territorial Convention.

At Sugar Mound, a strong Topeka precinct, these specious extras had been extensively circulated, and by the day of the election had produced their desired effect. The old settlers came thronging to the polls, and as they deposited their ballots for State officers, they would not unfrequently inquire of the officers conducting the election :

"Is this the *Free State policy* as decided on by the Convention ?"

And the answer invariably returned by the judges of the poll, which settled all doubts in the minds of the inquirers, was :

“ It is the *Free State decision!*”

About noon Capt. Montgomery, and a few of his most devoted followers, arrived on the ground. The election was held in a log building at the east end of the Mound, then used as a store and Post-office. The “ *Lawrence Republican*,” to counteract the false assertions of the “ *Herald of Freedom*,” a few days before the election, issued a circular containing a true account of the proceedings of the Convention alluded to. A copy of this circular was forwarded to Capt. Montgomery, to his address at the Mound, and shortly after his arrival was placed in his hands. From his earliest residence in Kansas, Montgomery had been an ardent Topeka man ; and even after the extra, purporting to give the decision of the Convention in favor of the voting policy, had made its appearance, he labored to dissuade his friends from voting for State officers, but not to such an extent as he would have done if he had not supposed the Territorial Convention had decided adverse to his convictions.

When he perused the Republican extra, and learned how grossly the people had been deceived, he felt it his duty to acquaint the assembled settlers with the nature of the deception, so that the fraud palmed up-

on them might influence the voters no longer. He accordingly mounted a disused store-box, and read the true proceedings of the falsely represented Convention, copied in full in the Republican extra, at the same time commenting at some length on the great deceit practiced upon them. When the assembled settlers learned the cheat that had duped them into voting contrary to their better judgment, they were greatly incensed. Numbers, who had voted for State officers, thinking that by so doing they were carrying out the policy of the party, expressed their dissatisfaction, and with one accord, demanded their ballots.—An exciting scene ensued. The crowd thronged around the poll, demanding the tickets they had deposited in the ballot-box for State officers. The judges of the election were well-meaning men, who sympathised with the deceived voters, but they knew no law which would justify them in restoring ballots when once deposited, and they refused to grant the requests of the multitude around them. The crowd fell back dissatisfied, hopeless of obtaining the votes they sorely repented depositing, but Montgomery stepped forward, and once more addressed the settlers.

“Freemen of Linn ! I have defended your *rights* in past time, and I am here to defend your *rights* to-day. The ballot-box is sacred only when the ballots therein deposited are given freely and without restraint by



those legally entitled to the privileges of freemen. The ballot-box is to express the free sentiments of a free people. When it does not do this, it is no more the exponent of the will of the people it is intended to represent, than it would be if armed invaders surrounded the poll, and deterred the legal voters from exercising the elective franchise. How is it with the ballot-box for State officers before us? Does it express the sentiments of the voters of Sugar Mound? The many deluded freemen asking for their ballots, deposited under false impressions, is an unmistakable negative to such a query. No, you have been grossly deceived! There is nothing legal in support of that ballot-box except the Lecompton Constitution, which you deem it a virtue to treat with contempt, and the moral law which would otherwise interfere to protect it, has been shorn of its majesty and power by the foul deceit practiced upon you. This ballot-box, falsely expressing your sentiments, I will destroy, and those wishing to vote for State officers can afterwards proceed as though it were a new election. Thus, freemen of Linn, I right you!"

While Montgomery was concluding his remarks, he advanced to the table on which several ballot-boxes were placed, and grasping the one containing the tickets for State officers, he threw it upon the floor with a force sufficient to burst it open, and strew the

ballots around the room. The judges witnessed its destruction without interfering in the slightest manner, and in a short time the voting on the Lecompton Constitution was recommenced, but as none present appeared to care about the State officers, the balloting on the Territorial ticket was not renewed.

This in brief is the truth concerning the destruction of the ballot-box at Sugar Mound, the 4th of January, 1858, by James Montgomery. I have simply sought to pen the action and the circumstances attending it as they really occurred, without commenting thereon ; and having accomplished my object, I will leave the reader to settle in his mind how much censure the action described should cause to be attached to its perpetrator, James Montgomery.

I now approach the darkest period of Southern Kansas history. Owing to the troubles on the Little Osage, Gov. Denver had ordered a company of dragoons to Fort Scott, and encouraged by their presence, the ruffians who had figured in '56 around Lecompton and Lawrence, and who had been forced to return to Fort Scott ; Clarke, Bocket and Co., commenced a new career more bloody and cruel than the first. Experience and defeat had made them both sagacious and vindictive, and the innocent and unsuspecting settlers were ere long made to feel the effects of their sharpened and cultivated depravity. One of their first steps

was to corrupt the soldiers of the Fort, and induce them by partisan and sectional prejudices, and the promises of a liberal share of the plunder, to enter into their schemes of harassing the settlers, by lending their uniforms and arms to the ruffians, and going with them to steal horses, rob and murder. The dragoons being mostly from South Carolina, it was not a very difficult task to form a combination having, for its object the expulsion of every Free State settler from the county. In order to give the reader an idea of the terrible consequences of this combination, I will give a brief account of a few of the many murders committed.

On the night of the 27th of March, '58, the ruffians of the Fort made a drive on the Free State settlements on the Little Osage, being informed by their spies that the river was unguarded. They first rode up to the house of a Mr. Denton, an inoffensive Free State man—called him out, and after asking him a few trifling questions, deliberately shot him. Some five shots were fired at him, two of which took effect. He expired in two hours. Before his death he charged his assassination to two men by the name of Brocket and Hardwick. They then proceeded to the residence of a Mr. Davis, a neighbor of Mr. Denton's, and demanded entrance. Suspecting them of being enemies, Mr. Davis refused to open the door. The ruffians fired

several times through the door; one of their shots took effect in his hand, but he was not seriously injured by any of their discharges. The next place visited was the house of a Mr. Hedrick. They arrived there about two o'clock. Mr. Hedrick was up, waiting on his sick wife. The attending physician was also present and up at the time. A call was made for admittance, and as soon as Mr. Hedrick opened the door and stepped into the opening, he was shot down, five buck-shot entering his side just below the breast. He never spoke, but fell dead upon the threshold of his dwelling. All these dark deeds were committed in one night. The news spread like wild-fire, and the deepest excitement everywhere prevailed. The settlers on the Osage, Mill Creek, and Marmaton, banded themselves and families together in small companies, as their situation, remoteness of position, etc., seemed to require to insure their safety. A number joined thus together at Mr. Harbin's, on Mill Creek, were alarmed one night about midnight, by some ruffians who stealthily approached the house, and fired several balls into the building, one of which took effect in young Harbin's thigh, seriously wounding him.

The few cases I have cited are but the mere epitomes of a portion of a winter's history, full of the dark crimes of the slave power, but they are sufficient to give the reader an insight into the distracted state of Southern Kansas during that gloomy period.

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The terror finally inspired in the breasts of the settlers, by the troops and their allies, was so extreme, that Montgomery, who had made his home in Bourbon Co. since February, saw the necessity of striking a blow that would destroy the charm of invincibility which was supposed to reside in gilt buttons with an eagle stamped on them, and accordingly used his utmost endeavors to come in collision with the dragoons. For some time his exertions were unsuccessful; the foe he wished to encounter was wary, and cared not to come in conflict with an enemy of whose prowess they had heard so much, unless they had greatly the advantage of numbers, etc. Accident at last gave the opportunity he had so long desired.

A settler on the Marmaton had some horses stolen, and information of the fact being sent to Montgomery, he came with a small number of his men to see if the property could not be found and restored to its right possessor. On arriving at the Marmaton, Montgomery found, as he expected, that the robbers were from the Fort, and crossing the Marmaton, he proceeded along the stream in the direction of the Fort, following the trail of the marauding party to ascertain if they were still any where in the vicinity. While thus boldly venturing, as it were, under the very guns of the Fort, intelligence of their whereabouts was communicated by some Pro-Slavery scouts to the residents of the



Fort, who deemed it an excellent opportunity to get some of the dreaded "Montgomery men" in their power, as the scouts who brought the word said they were certain they were Montgomery's men from their appearance ; and one fancied he saw the chieftain himself in the little squad of men from the place he last reconnoitred their position.

Wishing, however, to proceed with some show of legality, Judge Williams, ever prompt to obey the behests of the Fort gentry, issued some random writs for the arrest of these unknown individuals, and ordered Capt. Anderson, of the dragoons, to take a sufficient number of his men and bring them in. Glad of an opportunity to signalize himself, the Captain placed himself at the head of some thirty men, and rode rapidly in pursuit of the little band of Montgomery. Armed to the teeth, they hurried up the Marmaton, paused for a few moments near a mill where a County Convention of Free State men was being held, and then, putting spurs to their horses, rode at full speed through the timber out into the open prairie. On gaining the prairie, they discovered the little band of Montgomery, some two or three miles in advance—and, encouraged by their paucity of number, the dragoons urged their horses to their swiftest gallop to overtake them.

No rash commander was Montgomery. Much as he



wished to prove the mettle of the troops, he not willingly would have come in collision with them on that occasion, as they outnumbered him three to one, but he plainly saw that it was the intention of the dragoons to ride them down unless they resisted, and that to escape was then impossible.

As they rode towards a body of timber skirting a tributary of the Marmaton, hotly pursued by the rapidly approaching dragoons, Montgomery held *saddle council* with his little band of followers, whether they should yield themselves up as prisoners, or trust the chances of a fight with the odds so overwhelmingly in favor of their adversaries. He told them that he could hold out no hope to them even in case they surrendered, that in all probability they would grace the nearest tree, and he himself was decidedly in favor of their defending themselves to the last extremity, but he would leave it to the majority to say whether it should be *ignominious surrender*, or perchance *honorably won deliverance*. Before marching to the Marmaton, Montgomery had systematized the men under his command into several divisions, and it happened that the flower of his company had accompanied him that morning to the Marmaton. They were all young men—men who felt that they had wrongs to avenge, and who, from years of experience, had grown familiar with the modes of guerrilla warfare and reck-

ed not of danger. Not a coward heart throbbed in the form of one of that little troop. With one accord the response was, "death before captivity to tyrants." Briefly then, their leader acquainted them with his plans.

A short distance ahead of them was the belt of timber alluded to. It was flanked by deep ravines, and could only be approached in front. Montgomery was acquainted with the character of the ground, and knew if he could once gain this position, it would partially compensate for his deficiency of numbers. Communicating this fact to his men, they urged their jaded horses to a last effort, and gained the timber just as the enemy came within hailing distance. Agreeably to instructions, they threw themselves from their horses and formed into a line. They were only eight in all. On thundered the dragoons, their sabres drawn, and gay equipments glistening in the sun. When they had approached within a few hundred feet, Montgomery called out to them to *halt*, which command not being obeyed was repeated by him with a like result. One of his company, a brave but somewhat profane young man, in the excitement of the moment, seeing that his leader's commands were disobeyed, exclaimed :

"Halt ! G\*\*\* d\*\*\* you, halt !"

No attention being paid to this last emphatic summons, and seeing that the dragoons intended cutting

them down as they stood, the little handful of heroes poured a volley of balls from their Sharpe's rifles into the advancing troops, and followed up the fire by commencing with their revolvers. The gallant dragoons were so thunderstruck by this unexpected resistance on the part of the men they expected to have made an easy prey, but who instead were making such carnage in their ranks, that after pausing only long enough to send a comparative harmless fire in return, they *wheeled and fled*, until they had retired beyond rifle range, leaving the field in possession of the victors.

The loss to the troops was considerable. One dragoon fell dead; another was so badly wounded he died in a short time after. Capt. Anderson was wounded, his horse shot under him, and two or three other dragoons were wounded, and several horses shot. The Free State loss was none, and but one man wounded, and he only slightly.

All these dead and wounded men were left lying on the grass by the dragoons in their hasty retreat. They were within a short distance of the Free State men, and their positions, as they lay exposed to the sun, could be plainly seen. Anderson lay under his horse, which had fallen upon him, and was apparently lifeless. The blood oozed, from the wounded men lying in all positions, upon the velvety sward. The rifles, revolvers, etc., looked very tempting to some of

the boys, and they begged permission to step out and pick them up, but their leader would not allow of it. It was Uncle Sam's property, he said, and they were Uncle Sam's boys themselves, and it was not right to steal from the old gentleman, but when the old gentleman got so out of his place as he did that afternoon, it was perfectly right to *learn* him his place.

In the interim the dragoons had held a council of war, sent back to the Free State Convention for a physician to attend the wounded, and dispatched a messenger to the Fort for reinforcements. The doctor came, and permission was granted him by the Free State men to attend the wounded. In due time a new company of dragoons came on from the Fort, accompanied by the villainous Bocket and his followers. Another council of war was then held, and it was finally decided that they should fall back on Fort Scott, which prudent conclusion was adopted. Montgomery and his men remained in their strong position until the enemy had retired, when they re-crossed the Marmaton and returned to head-quarters.

For some time the friends of Montgomery deemed it policy to ignore his connection with the skirmish of "Yellow Paint," as it was termed, but the unjustifiable manner in which the troops conducted the mission with which they were charged by Judge Williams, was deemed in itself a sufficient justification of the

gallant defense made by Montgomery and his men ; and it was soon trumpeted far and near that Montgomery had overcome the boasted prowess of the federal troops, and vanquished a force three times superior to his own.

The moral effect of the engagement was even greater than the loss sustained by the troops would seem to indicate. The *prestige* of United States soldiers as posses for border ruffians to harass the people with was destroyed. By that fight—the first between the settlers and the federal soldiery in Kansas—it was satisfactorily demonstrated that a Sharpe's rifle ball, carefully directed, would have the same effect upon a dragoon as upon a common man, and the soldiers of Fort Scott, by their after conduct, gave evidence that the *demonstration* was not wholly lost upon them.

From all parts of the Territory congratulations flowed in on Montgomery. Old Capt. Brown of Osawattomie, when he learned the particulars of the engagement, said that the like had not happened before in the Territory, and that the manner of his availing himself of the strong position that offered, and the skill with which he conducted the engagement, stamped him as one of the first commanders of the age. The *Lawrence Republican*, in an able editorial, expressed its approbation in unmistakable language, and among the true friends of freedom all over the



Territory, wherever the affair was understood, there was but one general sentiment of approbation.

Disturbances once more commencing in Linn Co., Montgomery left the neighborhood of Fort Scott, and returned to the vicinity of his home. Finding that the leading Pro-Slavery men of Linn Co., had entered into a combination with the ruffians of the border to drive out the Free State settlers as soon as the Lecompton Constitution should pass Congress, he went to those, and only those who had formerly been active in robbing his neighbors, and ordered them to leave the Territory. The Davis' on Big Sugar, Fox and Barlow of Paris, &c., were among those warned off. Some went through fear, but only those implicated in the troubles of '56, and since concerned in schemes against the peace of the Territory, were required to leave.

I have now brought my narrative about up to the period from which the events, in which the subject of this biography fills a prominent part, are already recorded, and with a few general remarks I will close this already lengthy chapter. There are a number of important incidents in the life of James Montgomery that the limits and proposed character of my work have precluded entirely; and many of the events comprised have been treated in a brief, cursory manner unworthy their importance. I have also carefully



guarded against allowing the respect and admiration I feel for the man, betray me into the statement of anything partisan and untruthful, preferring in many instances that my sentences should appear cold rather than anything should be penned which might be construed into a panegyric. I would beg of the unprejudiced reader to reflect, if tempted to doubt the truthfulness of these pages, that my opportunities to know the truth of what I write were good, and that my self-imposed task is not for *hire*, but *love*. I learned to know Montgomery through the praises of a grateful people, and through hours of social converse while in the trooper saddle I followed his lead ; and I have assumed the office of historian simply and solely because I liked the man, gloried in his hazardous, daring career, and deemed the true story of his life should be told.

I will close with the selection of one of the many descriptions of Montgomery by writers on Kansas politics. It is from the pen of one of the correspondents of the *N. Y. Evening Post*. It is as follows :

“In conversation he talks mildly, in a calm, even voice, using the language of a cultivated, educated gentleman. His antecedents are unexceptionable ; he was always a Free State man, although coming from a Slave State, where he was noted as a good citizen, and for his mild, even temperament. In his daily conduct he maintains the same character now ; but when in action and under fire, he displays a dar-

ing fearlessness, untiring perseverance, and an indomitable energy that has given him the leadership in this border warfare. His discretion, courage, and acknowledged ability, have gained him what he will continue to receive—the confidence and support of the southern tier of counties. Montgomery's enrolled company numbers from four to five hundred men, all of whom are old residents of the territory, and are, consequently, familiar with the peculiar mode of fighting pursued by the border ruffians. Some are desperate men, and could their histories be told, you would not wonder that they followed their border ruffian persecutors to the bitter end. There are two boys in that company whose dying father charged them to avenge his cowardly murder. Five bullets pierced his body as he stepped from the door-sill to extend the hospitalities of his cabin to his murderers. Others have been robbed at home, or on the highways, and not one of them but what has suffered some outrage, or indignity from those villains headed by Brocket, Hamilton, Clarke and Titus. Notwithstanding every incentive to retaliate actuates these men to demand blood for blood, yet Montgomery is able to control and direct them. He truly tempers justice with mercy, and he has always protected women and children from harm, and has never shed blood except in conflict, or in self-defence. Such is the portrait of the Kansas Hero—  
JAMES MONTGOMERY."

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE ATTACK ON FORT SCOTT.

“ Well knows the fair and friendly moon  
The band that Marion leads—  
The glitter of their rifles,  
The scamper of their steeds.  
A moment in the British camp—  
A moment—and away,  
Back to the pathless forest,  
Before the peep of day.”—BRYANT.

THE intelligence of the release of the prisoners arrested by Sheriff Walker, without even the farce of a trial by the civil authorities of Fort Scott, created the most intense excitement among the settlers of Bourbon Co., and from man to man was passed the indignant watchword, “Down with Fort Scott!” “Down with the stronghold of tyranny!” Anxiously was the return of Montgomery awaited.

I well remember the evening of his arrival on the Little Osage. It was the second day following our return from Fort Scott. The night was unusually warm, and the men composing the regular force of Montgomery were encamped in the dense body of tim-

ber bordering on the Osage, a short distance from Raysville. Among the hardy troopers who since the earliest commencement of Southern Kansas difficulties, had almost lived in the saddle, or the green wood, and thereby become inured to hardship and exposure, the comforts of civilization were but lightly regarded, and the forest or prairie, with the overarching sky for canopy, answered as well for the wearied frame as the softest bed of down. Nor is that rude, unsettled life wholly devoid of pleasure to its followers. There is a charm in the hurried march and the swift attack ; the life spent in the saddle, that those who have never shared its perils can but poorly appreciate. And then at night, when the labors of the day are over, and the thoughts of immediate danger banished, and around the camp-fire circles the ready joke, the tale and the song, the stern trooper for the time-being forgets his wrongs, and becomes as light-hearted as in " the days ago," ere sorrow and care befell his path through life.

On the evening in question, light-hearted merriment presided over the Free State camp. Peal after peal of laughter burst from the lips of the men, and was borne by the night wind until lost in the hoarser murmurs of the Osage. Capt. Bayne was among the troopers, and his burly frame shook with merriment as he narrated his interview with Judge Williams, and

described the terror of that *worthy* at the vision unfolded to him in the wilderness. The ardent McCannon and a score of others of scarcely less note, were also in attendance, and contributed to the cheer and festivity of the occasion. Old campaigns, involving scenes of danger, were relived by the men, and tale after tale told. One of the many anecdotes I will briefly narrate. It was entitled the "Double Barreled Cannon," and is as follows:—

"At Fort Scott the ruffians have in their possession a large telescope, which they bring in requisition in times of danger to prevent themselves from being surprised by the pesky 'abolitionists.' One day one of the chivalrous sons of the sunny South was taking a survey of the surrounding country through the above mentioned instrument, when he saw something suspicious approaching from the direction of Fort Bayne. It was a large, black object, with two holes in the end, mounted on wheels, attended by several wagons and a number of armed horsemen. What could it be? Something was evidently in the wind! He studied, peered and conjectured. The mental calibre of his mind was not sufficient to elucidate the mystery. He summoned assistance. A crowd of congenial spirits soon collected. For a time the wisdom of the assembled solons was baffled. At length a bright idea struck one of the assembled group. It was a *double*

*barreled cannon!* Yes, it could be nothing else ! It was Capt. Montgomery's company, fully equipped for war, coming with this new 'Yankee machine' to destroy their town ! Sensations of terror and dismay pierced the hearts of the Fort Scott ruffians. A deputation of their bravest heroes was sent out to treat with the besiegers and ascertain their intentions. The object of so much consternation was approached with fear and caution, when——thank heaven, the *double barrel cannon* turned out to be nothing more dangerous than the *boiler* of a steam mill, which the enterprising brothers Ray were having conveyed to their mill on the Osage. The joke was too good to be allowed to be forgotten by the Free State boys, and was repeatedly thrown up to the denizens of the Fort to their no small annoyance."

When the above story was completed, one of the company was called on for a song. The person on whom the demand was made was a slender, delicate appearing youth, with something of the poet look in his light blue eyes and almost girlish countenance.

"Sing us the song you made about the Osage, Ned," said one of the men.

Several joining in the request, the youth was at last induced to commence. The song was in itself a mere doggerel, but the singer's voice was good, and in the forest solitude of the Osage, it rang with a fine effect.



I procured a copy of the verses from the singer, and will transcribe them for the reader. Shorn, however, of the circumstances which produced them and gave them their effect, I do not suppose they will be of much value to the reader, but they may not be wholly devoid of interest. I will take the liberty of altering the heading, and the future compilers and ballad mongers of the border songs of Kansas may make what disposition they choose of the doggerel.

## SONG OF MONTGOMERY'S MEN.

(Air—BANKS OF THE RIO GRANDE.)

“ One morning bright, by early light,  
Word ran from youth to age,  
That Brocket then, with all his men,  
Was on the Little Osage.

*Chorus*—O, the Little Osage,  
The Little Osage,  
We'll fight the foe where'er they go,  
Upon the Little Osage.

Montgomery heard full soon the word,  
And came, the foe to engage,  
But they took flight, without a fight,  
From the Little Osage.

*Chorus.*

Every man of Montgomery's band  
Shall live on history's page,  
And Montgomery's name have deathless fame  
Upon the Little Osage.

*Chorus.*

The Fort Scott band tried to command,  
But found *birds* hard to *cage*,  
When Cannon was about, who would dig out,  
When taken from Little Osage.

*Chorus.*

Pro-Slavery men of every den,  
Now fear Montgomery's rage,  
Who would not cease till he made peace  
Upon the Little Osage.

*Chorus.*

To free our land from a tyrant band,  
Our sires did once engage,  
And liberty does Montgomery  
Preserve on Little Osage.

*Chorus.*

The song had scarcely ceased when its subject made his appearance. If not received with the shrilly demonstrations which the great poet describes as accompanying the reception of Roderick Dhu by his followers, his presence was none the less acceptable, and the light, careless character of the assemblage wholly disappeared in the earnest council that succeeded his arrival. The chief subject that claimed the attention of those in deliberation was the policy of an attack on Fort Scott. All the troopers concurred in the opinion that a well-directed assault on the Fort would do more to promote the objects of the Free State party than any thing that could possibly be accomplished

in any other direction, and the only difference of opinion was in regard to the feasibility, time, etc., of an attack. Montgomery briefly stated his reasons for favoring an immediate assault on the Fort as follows :

“The people of Fort Scott, in releasing the murderers arrested by Sheriff Walker, without even the farce of a trial, and in utter defiance of public sentiment and the laws of honor, had forfeited all claims on the protection of the freemen of Kansas, and plainly proven that they preferred hostilities to an adjustment of difficulties. If guerrilla warfare was to be continued—and the gauntlet had been thrown down by the ruffians of the Fort—he was decidedly in favor of striking a blow at the enemy that would convince them that the Free State party of Southern Kansas was in earnest—that if they *provoked war* they should have *war*, and as Fort Scott was the hot-bed of villainy and corruption, Fort Scott was the proper point of attack. A well-directed assault on the Fort, convincing the citizens that unless there was a change their town must fall, might possibly induce them to send for the Governor, whose presence could do no harm, and might perchance be productive of good.”

Then followed a desultory conversation respecting the number of troops in the Fort, the customs of the garrison, the time for an attack, etc. ; and although the proposed expedition was one that would involve

in the greatest danger all concerned therein, the men discussed it in its minutia as coolly as though it was an affair of but ordinary moment. One of the troopers made allusion to the course to be pursued in case the expedition failed in its object and was signally defeated. Montgomery turned to him and repeated the following sublime lines of Byron :—

“ They never *fail* who die  
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore,  
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs  
Be strung to city gates, and castle walls,  
Yet still their spirits stalk abroad. Though years  
E lapse, and others share as dark a doom,  
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts,  
Which o’erpower all others, and conduct  
The world at last to freedom.”

The time had worn to nearly midnight, and the lights faintly glimmered around, save on a distant swell where the dry grass of the previous summer was redly burning. The conversation ceased, the weary troopers dropped one by one to rest, and soon quiet reigned over the valley of the Osage, broken only by the irregular howling of wolves in the distance.

Several days elapsed before a suitable night for the expedition arrived. In the interim preparations for the attack were conducted in the most private manner, not any of the Free State settlers even being initiated in the proceedings, save those who were to par-

ticipate in the perils of the assault. The reason for this prudence will be obvious to the reader when he reflects that if by any means intelligence of the contemplated movement reached the ears of the denizens of the Fort, their superior numbers would enable them to crush the little band of Montgomery the moment they ventured within their power.

On the night of the 6th of June, Montgomery and his men left their head-quarters on the Marmaton, and took up their march for Fort Scott. There being no moon the early part of the night, trusty guides were procured to pilot the expedition through the darkness to its proper destination. It was a night to be remembered by those engaged in the enterprise. The day had been unusually sultry, and towards sunset, the familiar black-caps of clouds—the sure precursors of a storm—began to make their appearance in the western sky. Night set in starless, and a pitchy darkness soon enveloped the forest and prairie. To use the felicitous words of Mrs. Baillie :

“The night grew wondrous dark : deep swelling gusts,  
And sultry stillness took the rule by turns,  
While o’er our heads the black and heavy clouds  
Rolled slowly on. It surely boded storm.”

The guides, although selected on account of their familiarity with the country, became bewildered in the darkness, and the expedition frequently wandered

aimlessly over the prairie, traversing miles without gaining a furlong in the direction of the Fort. The storm, which had been so long threatening, at last broke. There did not a great deal of rain fall, the storm being of a gusty character and soon passing over, but the accompanying thunder and lightning was very severe. The thunder of the prairies is very different from the tame thunder of the Atlantic coast. I have heard it when its mighty roll was almost deafening, and when the accompanying flashes of lightning were of corresponding intensity. After the storm passed over it grew somewhat lighter, and just before midnight rose up before the eyes of the gratified troopers the dark outlines of the buildings of Fort Scott.

Before proceeding further, it will be necessary for me to give a brief description of the place. Fort Scott is pleasantly situated about four miles from the Missouri line, on the point of a narrow bluff made by a small branch putting into the Marmaton river from the South. As you go South the prairie widens, and on this elevation the modern town of Fort Scott is principally situated. At the Fort the divide is about fifty rods wide. The Fort itself can scarcely lay claim to the title of Fort, being but a small military outpost in no way fortified. It was built seventeen years ago as a station for troops to hold in check the various tribes of Indians. The buildings are all frame



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except one, which has been used for the guard-room. The buildings all front on the public square which contains two or three acres. The officers' old quarters, four in number, are on one side of the square. Two buildings, one on each side of the square, are barracks for soldiers. On the same side with one of these barracks is a large stable, two hundred feet long, for the horses of the dragoons. On the remaining side of the square is the old guard-house, and the building formerly used as a hospital, and one other building for soldiers' quarters. A number of these buildings are no longer occupied by the government troops.

On arriving at the Fort the sentinels were quietly secured, and after reconnoitering the town, and finding that none of the inhabitants were astir, the troopers commenced collecting straw and other combustible matter from the stables of the town, and proceeded to fire the Fort, and the Pro-Slavery hotel. The fire blazed up redly, throwing its lurid glare across the broad square, and lighting up the deserted streets of the town. The alarm of fire was soon sounded, and the troops and denizens of the place swarmed like so many bees to the scene of the conflagration, and commenced the extinguishment of the flames. But scarcely had they collected, before a fire was opened upon them by the men of Montgomery, from a ravine close at hand to which they had retreated. The astonished soldiers

fled from their exposed situation to one of greater security, and commenced a rapid and irregular fire in turn. There is something exciting in the rapid discharge of Sharpe's rifles. Their whirring "uz-ur-uz" is suggestive of something far from pleasant, and a man who is in any way *nervous* had better have nothing to do with such dangerous music. The firing was kept up by the little band of Montgomery until the fire which had been kindled against the Pro-Slavery hotel, and which, in consequence of the building being covered with a fire-proof paint, had failed to communicate itself to the edifice, had died away, enveloping the town in pitchy darkness, when the little party of Free State men slowly and in an orderly manner left the place.

The loss sustained by the enemies of Kansas was never known to a certainty outside of Fort Scott. They would not own to the death of any of their number, but after that night there was a vacancy on the roll of the infantry that was never accounted for to my knowledge. In an after visit to Fort Scott I saw numerous evidences of that night's attack. The house of ex-Gov. Ransom received several bullets, and the house of a Mr. Shubert, a baker, situated between the point of attack and the principal buildings of the town, was completely riddled with balls. It was said that a lady had the dress upon her person perforated

by a bullet, but the statement rests on the authority of a correspondent of the "*Herald of Freedom*," giving the Fort Scott version of the affair, and I do not vouch for its correctness. The greatest alarm pervaded the bosoms of the inhabitants of the town during the stay of Montgomery. The shrieks of the women and children could be heard above the sharp reports of the fire-arms. Nor was the terror confined to the weaker sex alone. Some of the more timid of the citizens ran affrighted out into the country, wakening up the scattering settlers with the most magnified reports of the surprise of the Fort by Montgomery, and the massacre going on of its inhabitants.

Montgomery retreated with his men to the Big Bend of the Marmaton river, some four or five miles from the Fort, where he stationed them in an advantageous position awaiting the approach of the enemy, from whom he expected an attack with daylight. But the troops had once dearly tested the fatal prowess of the men who, like the immortal Grecians, fought

"For their altars and their fires,  
God and their native land,"

and cared not to rashly risk a second engagement. They sent out scouts, paraded the force of the garrison beyond the limits of the town, etc., but they took good care not to approach within rifle range of where the men of Montgomery were known to be concealed.

Finding that they were not disposed to attack him, Montgomery evacuated his position and returned to headquarters. While on the Marmaton he replied to an order of Major Gen. Lane commanding him to disband his company and report himself to headquarters, to answer to grave charges made against him as an officer commissioned by the Military Board. The following is a copy of his transmitted reply :—

MARMATON, June 6th, 1858.

EDS. LAWRENCE REPUBLICAN—*Gents* :—I see in your issue of May 27th, an article headed “Military Orders,” and signed “J. H. Lane, Maj. Gen.” in which I am ordered to disband my company and report myself instantler. etc. I have only to say that my command as a militia officer was resigned in the early part of last winter, some time before the order of February 18th was received by me.

It is not true, as charged in the *Lecompton Democrat*, that I am acting under a commission from the Military Board. I never had a commission from that Board ; and neither Gen. Lane nor the Board are responsible for my conduct.

I am identified with a popular movement in this section of the country, having for its object a redress of grievances. Our work is a necessary one ; and, so soon as it is accomplished, we will lay down our arms and submit to the laws.

Respectfully yours,

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

The above letter was written at the earnest solicitation of some of Montgomery’s friends, who deemed it due to his character that the facts of the case should

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be given to the public, and is the only letter he has ever written to my knowledge in vindication of his conduct from the many writers.

“ Who neither knew  
His faculties, nor person, yet would be  
The chroniclers of his doings.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

## A TRIP TO WEST POINT.

“ Each town along the border  
Responded to the call,  
But in grim looking Ruffians  
West Point surpassed them all.”—BORDER SONG.

WHILE the events recorded were occurring in Bourbon Co., a different policy was being adopted in the adjoining county of Linn. The conservative element of the county—the settlers emigrating originally from Missouri and states further South—scrupulously held forth the idea that all that was needed to restore peace was to *cultivate a better understanding* with Missouri; and with this view they had labored to bring about a Convention at some central point, to be composed of delegates from the Southern counties of Kansas, and the border counties of Missouri. They finally succeeded in meeting with some response to their proposition among the better portion of the citizens of Missouri, and a conference meeting was appointed at West Point, to take the unsettled state



of the Territory into consideration, and promote, if possible, a better feeling between Missouri and Kansas.

The great majority of the settlers had but little faith in any good proceeding from a conference meeting held in a town of such established notoriety as West Point, but anxious to do anything from which there was a hope of bettering the distracted condition of the country, they held a Convention at Paris to elect delegates to represent the Territory at the conference meeting at West Point, appointed June 8th. Being previously informed of the time, place, &c., of the intended meeting, I hastened from Bourbon Co., and, with one of the conferees, Mr. Danford of Linn county, rode from Sugar Mound to the Trading Post, distant some ten or twelve miles, arriving at that place about 10 a. m. On nearing the Marais des Cygnes, one of the largest streams in Southern Kansas, we found it greatly swollen by recent rains, but being anxious to cross without delay, we committed our horses to the seething flood, and with some difficulty gained the opposite shore, although not without serious doubts at one time as to the result, and a thorough drenching caused by the ignorance of our horses in swimming.

We found the Post guarded by some forty or fifty volunteers under the proper officers. They were in

fine spirits, and, being acquainted with a number of them, I soon learned all that had transpired of moment since my departure. There had been several predatory parties over the border at different periods, but such a strict guard had been kept up by the Free State companies stationed at various places along the line, that they had not been able to penetrate far enough into the Territory to perpetrate much depredation on the settlers.

Waiting only the arrival of the balance of the committee, we left the Post, (first ordering the men on duty to follow the conferees in a couple of hours, to the Missouri line,) and took the broad road leading to West Point. All along the route we met teamsters and settlers coming out of the town, who gave the most alarming accounts of the excited condition of the place ; the great number of people collected ; the threats uttered against certain members of the committee by the ruffians, etc. The appearance of the country was even more desolate than when I last beheld it. The luxuriant crops of wheat, oats, &c., were beaten down by the cattle that had rioted with impunity on them, and the deserted habitations of the settlers were rapidly going to decay. The whole aspect of the country reminded me of the lines of the poet :

“Sunk are thy homes in shapeless ruin all,  
And the long grass o’ertops the mouldering wall;  
And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler’s hand,  
Far, far away thy children leave the land.”

On arriving at the suburbs of West Point, we saw a large number of horses hitched around the town and picketed over the prairie, and, on fairly entering the town, we could scarcely move through the streets with our horses for the collection of people that had gathered in the little border town of West Point. The number congregated could not have been less than one hundred and fifty men—perhaps more—a *very respectable sized* delegation certainly on the part of Missouri to meet a half-dozen conferees on the part of Kansas. This extraordinary procedure on the part of the citizens of Bates Co., after pledging themselves that no unusual gathering should be allowed, at first naturally excited suspicion in the minds of the committee, but on unhesitatingly and familiarly mixing with them, we found that, with the exception of some half-dozen noisy ruffians, the majority were civilly disposed, and even to a great extent unarmed. It was about midday when we arrived, and the committee were soon after invited to dinner by various citizens of the town. At 1 p. m., the meeting organized in a large room over the principal store in the town. Three of the border counties of Missouri were repre-

sented through delegates at the Convention—Bates, Verron and Jasper. The crowd still continuing to increase, a messenger was dispatched by the committee to order the men to approach within a certain distance of the town. When about half way between West Point and the advancing troops, and while passing by a cove of timber, the messenger was fired upon by a concealed assailant, and his horse struck and slightly injured by the ball. He proceeded, however, and saw his instructions fulfilled by the horsemen.

The conference finally resulted in the adoption and signing by all the conferees, a series of resolutions, the synopsis of which was:—That the citizens of Western Missouri, through their delegates, pledge themselves to assist in arresting and bringing to justice Capt. Hamilton, and all the men concerned with him in the tragedy of the Marais des Cygnes; that they would forewarn the people of Kansas of any future invasion of Hamilton & Co., or similar organization, and assist in putting it down; the settlers of the Territory in a like manner, through their delegates, pledging themselves to assist in repelling any invasion of Missouri by their neighbors; and either party to be absolved from the contract on the slightest breach of faith towards it by the other.

After the articles of agreement were prepared and signed by the conferees, they were read and submitted

to the *sovereign people* for their action. A few of the *Simon-pure ruffian order* objected to the resolutions, and made hostile demonstrations of their dissatisfaction, but the majority of those in attendance expressed themselves as satisfied with the articles, and appeared to be willing and anxious to do everything honorable to bring about an understanding and promote peace. The longer we remained, however, the more noisy and turbulent the populace became, on whom *bad liquor* and the *inflamatory speeches* of leading ruffians began to produce dangerous effects, and more than once some member of the committee was rudely jostled by the crowd ripe for an affray.

We left the place about 5 p. m., and arrived at the Trading Post just at dusk. After a good supper, prepared by the hands of Snyder, the brave blacksmith, who so gallantly repulsed the villainous gang of Hamilton, on the occasion of the Post tragedy, and who, with his family, is regular cook for the garrison at the Post; the "boys" all collected in front of the temporary Fort, and the resolutions adopted at West Point were read to them to their apparent great satisfaction. The reader, one of the conferees, (Mr. Danford,) also added a few explanatory and well-timed remarks, which were received with great enthusiasm. Mr. Danford is a young man of more than ordinary ability, a ready and fluent speaker, and was a member of the

late Territorial legislature from Linn Co. It was interesting to observe the honest, seamed features of the sturdy Snyder during the eloquent remarks of young Danford. Occasionally after the delivery of a patriotic sentiment, he would half rise from his seat, and with his strongly marked Dutch accent, make some such confirmation as, "Dat's true ! Dat's the motto for free men !" etc.

During our departure a rumor had gone the rounds of the camp that Gov. Denver was en route for the southern portion of the Territory, and this good news, coupled with the happy termination of the conference alluded to, had caused the hopes of a speedy adjustment of existing difficulties to grow and brighten. I could hear it in the light jest that went circling around the camp-fire, and see it in the beaming countenances of the men as their thoughts would wander to their distant, cabin homes, from which nothing but the great principle for which Kansas has sacrificed so much, could induce them to absent themselves.

In consequence of an unusual number of settlers having collected to hear the result of the embassy, the accommodations for sleeping were very limited, and, as on a previous occasion, every expedient was resorted to by the men to make themselves comfortable for the night. Despite the sultriness of the day, the evening air was chill, and the meagre accommodations of the



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place were appropriated before half the applicants were supplied. It was amusing to see some of the unprovided ones running around the quarters searching for a still vacant place, and hear their ejaculations at each successive failure. I could not avoid contrasting the antipathy manifested by some of the volunteers towards exposing themselves, with the proverbial indifference shown to such things by the men of Montgomery. Finally all save the sentinels sank to rest, and the stillness that reigned around was only broken by the hoarse murmurs of the swollen waters of the fatal Marais des Cygnès.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE VISIT OF GOV. DENVER.

“Now set your flags a-flying,  
And beat the ready drum,  
For joy to Southern Kansas,  
The Governor has come !  
He’s cowed the Fort Scott ruffians,  
He’s set the people free,  
And all their brave defenders  
He’s treated elemently.”—BORDER SONG.

THE flying rumors of the Governor’s visit South were indeed true ! The Executive of Kansas had listened with a deaf ear to the prayers and petitions of the injured settlers to come to the scene of difficulties ; he had even heard unmoved the heart-rending narrations of the survivors of the tragedy of the Marais des Cygnes, who had been borne to Lecompton that they might work upon the feelings of the Governor ; but when the swift express went up from his friends in Fort Scott, that their town was in jeopardy, the Governor commenced preparations for an immediate departure to the Southern portion of the Territory.

He left Lawrence the morning of June 9th, by pri-

vate conveyance, and attended by a retinue of gentlemen representing both the Pro-Slavery and Free State parties of Kansas. In the train were ex-Gov. Robinson, Judge Wright, Babb of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, etc. After many vexatious delays in consequence of the streams all being flooded by recent rains, the Gov. and his suite arrived at Moneka, Linn Co., a small town about thirty miles north of Fort Scott, the evening of June 12th. They had then entered the troubled region. At Moneka they remained over night.

The news of the Governor's arrival South spread with rapidity over the country, producing in the breasts of the harassed settlers all manner of conjecture as to his probable course of action. The prevailing belief was that he would at least mete out partial justice to the freemen of the Territory, but great fears were entertained that Montgomery and those who had so nobly acted in defence of the settlers, would be deemed *criminals*, and jeopardized by the arrival of the Governor. Scores of writs had been issued on trumped-up charges by the civil authorities of Fort Scott against some of the most inoffensive men in the Territory, and a general desire was manifested by the settlers to learn what disposition he intended making of those bogus mandates. If it was his purpose to hunt down and arrest the men they, to a man, regarded as their protectors from a horde of *savage ruffians*, they wished to know

it, to take measures accordingly to insure their safety from apprehension.

The next morning a messenger was dispatched to wait on the Governor, to learn something relative to his purposed plans for future action, his intentions regarding the multitude of *bogus writs*, etc. The evening before, the Governor had held a lengthy conversation with one of the leading citizens of the place, A. Wattles, formerly a co-editor of the *Herald of Freedom*, from whom he learned the true state of affairs in Southern Kansas. He learned that Montgomery, instead of being an outlaw, condemned by the people, was engaged in a *popular movement*, receiving the heart-felt approbation of the masses. He felt that he had been deceived by the representations of the Fort Scott faction, and the *fawning sycophants* that filled his ears at Lecompton, and he decided on a policy very different from what they desired or expected. He was thus favorably disposed for the reception of the messenger, to whom he communicated sufficient of his intentions to satisfy him that the Free State party would receive justice from the proposed adjustment of difficulties by the Governor, and with this assurance the messenger departed.

Shortly after this interview the Governor and his suite took their departure for Fort Scott. They had journeyed about two miles when they were overtaken

by four or five armed horsemen, who accompanied the train of the Governor the remainder of the distance to the Osage. It was Capt. Montgomery and a few of his most trusty followers. They rode familiarly by the carriage of the Governor, Montgomery himself frequently joining in the conversation going forward. In this manner the escort proceeded until its arrival at Raysville, where a dinner had been prepared for the occasion. Montgomery went to the same house that received the retinue of the Governor, and while the hostess (Mrs. Ray,) was preparing the meal, was drawn into conversation by Mr. Babb, a gentleman of strongly *national proclivities*, who reports the interview in an issue of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, (7) as follows :

“At Raysville I found myself seated by the side of the guerrilla chieftain, Montgomery. He is a fine looking man, and in personal appearance strongly resembles John C. Fremont. He is a remarkable person in many respects. There is none of the swagger and bravado of the *Jim Lane class* of heroes about him. He talks mildly, using good English, and quotes from the Scriptures freely and correctly. He is one of the most intelligent men I ever met with, and I learned more from him in an hour's conversation concerning the political history, the geology and natural resources of the Territory, than I had previously acquired from Prof. Daniels and all the men of science with whom I am acquainted in Kansas,” etc., etc.

After dinner was over, the Governor and suite adjourned to where some rude accommodations for speaking had been prepared by the multitude who had collected to see the Governor, and hear him announce his policy for an adjustment of existing difficulties. They came from all parts of the county on horse back and on foot, armed with that invariable accompaniment of the Kansas settler, the rifle, and a decent silence was preserved during the short speech the Governor made the assemblage. It was plain and practical in character, referring chiefly to the unquiet state of the Territory, and presenting, in brief, his plan for the adjustment of difficulties. The imperfect synopsis of his remarks is as follows :—(8)

“Fellow citizens ! I have come to Southern Kansas at your urgent solicitations, to assist by my presence, in removing existing difficulties from your midst. In the prosecution of my purpose, I shall treat the actual settlers without regard to past difference—I shall know no name and know no party. I do not propose to dig up or review the past. I believe both parties have been to blame for by-gone difficulties, but with that I have nothing to do. My mission is to secure peace for the future. I propose as the basis for an agreement, whereby to produce tranquillity throughout the Territory, the following conditions :

First, the withdrawal of the troops from Fort Scott :



Second, the election of new county officers in Bourbon Co. by the citizens of the county, irrespective of party :

Third, the stationing of troops along the Missouri frontier, to protect the settlers of the Territory from future invasions :

Fourth, the suspension of the execution of all old writs until their *legitimacy* is authenticated before the proper tribunal :

Fifth, the abandonment of the field by Montgomery and his men, and all other parties of armed men, whether Free State or Pro-Slavery.

When the Governor concluded his remarks, he took his seat amid the rapturous applause of the assembled settlers. His proposed policy was so different from what they expected, that it took some time to form the *new idea* in their minds, and accustom themselves to its proper signification. What, remove their olden enemies, the troops, from the Fort ? The news seemed almost too good to be real ! The old officers of the county, elected by the Fort Scott influence, were scarcely less distasteful. What wonder then the stout yeomanry of the Osage rent the air with their plaudits on learning that such a radical reform was in contemplation !

Immediately after concluding, he commenced preparing for his departure, and while the cortege was

getting in readiness, Montgomery came forward and briefly addressed the assemblage as follows :

“Fellow Citizens ! I have listened with great attention to the remarks which you have just heard, and it gives me much pleasure to be able to say that I mainly agree with them. On behalf of the citizens of Southern Kansas, I thank the Chief Magistrate of our distracted land for the spirit of justice by which he seems actuated. All the Free State party desires is *justice* ; it has been a *stranger* to it a long time, and will hail this fair and honorable agreement with delight. That part of the agreement which refers to myself is particularly pleasing. In the last seven months I have not been as much as a fortnight at home, and a return to it will give me sincere pleasure. It has not been *choice* that has kept me away, but *necessity*. While my country needed my services I could not leave the field, however great the temptation to do so. To-day three hundred men follow, when needed, the banner and fortunes of Montgomery. When the Gov. redeems his pledges given to-day, I will disband these men and retire to my cabin home, there to remain.—As long as the Gov. and his friends *respect* their side of the treaty, I and my party will respect ours.”

The Gov. and his suit had left while Montgomery was speaking, and when he concluded, he and his followers mounted their horses and rode after the cortege,

traveling in the direction of the Marmaton. The party staid that night among the settlers of the Marmaton, and the next morning crossed the river and entered Fort Scott. The residents of the town were expecting the Gov., and everything was in readiness to do honor to his arrival. Quite a number of the citizens of the county had collected in the Fort, either coming singly, or accompanying the escort of the Gov. The villains of the stamp of *Brocket & Co.* had all left the place, but it still harbored a horde of ruffians who, though less noted, were not a whit behind their superiors in the disposition to commit mischief. They were all in fine spirits, regarding the visit of the Gov. as a triumph over the "Abolitionists," and after dinner he was conducted by the leading citizens to the place for speaking amid the cheers of the populace.

His remarks were chiefly a repetition of his speech at Raysville, but very differently were they received by the Fort gentry, from what they were by the bold freemen of the Osage. Had a thunder storm suddenly overspread the clear sky, and dropped its bolts of wrath at their feet, they could not have been more astounded than they were to hear such language drop from the lips of Gov. Denver. Astonishment at first kept the ruffians speechless, but ere he concluded his remarks, they had gathered in groups, and their muttered comments, and sullen, dissatisfied visages,

gave ample evidence that the policy of the Gov. was but illy relished by the denizens of Fort Scott. One of the most conspicuous of the ruffians was ex-Gov. Ramson, formerly Governor of Michigan. His antecedents are somewhat curious. While Gov. of Michigan he was an *ultra anti-Slavery man*, sent a Free-Soil message to the Legislature, and was boisterous in his denunciations of "Southern Slave-whipping rascals," to use his own words. For this he was voted a *deserter* from the Democratic ranks, and ejected from the party. He next tried to supersede Gen. Cass in the U. S. Senate, by a secret combination with the Whig members of the Legislature. Failing in this movement, he emigrated to Kansas, and identified himself with the Pro-Slavery party of the Territory. He soon distinguished himself for the violence with which he espoused his *new principles*, and in '57 was nominated for Congress by the Pro-Slavery party, in opposition to M. J. Parrott, nominated by the Free State party. Some of his *antecedents leaking out*, he failed to receive the full Pro-Slavery vote, and was defeated by a large majority, since which period he has chiefly resided in Fort Scott, and has been more or less concerned in all the acts of ruffianism for which that town is notorious.

On the occasion of the Governor's visit, he was one of the leading spirits of the ruffian element of the

Fort, and one of the most open in his expressions of disapprobation of the defined policy of the Governor. Respect for his office kept him from giving loose rein to his passions while he was speaking, but when his place was filled by a successor, that restraint was removed. While one of the suite (Judge Wright) was speaking of the disreputable character of the place, Ransom stepped up to him in an authoritative manner, and shaking his fist under his nose, said :

“ That’s a G\*\* d\*\*\*\*\*d lie ! And we don’t allow any one to come into Fort Scott and talk as you do ! We rule the *roast* here ! ”

A scene of wild confusion ensued. The allies of Ransom pressed around him, whipping their revolvers from their pockets, and the friends of Wright thronged to his side, in no wise dismayed by the hostile demonstrations of Ransom and his confederates. A general melee would in an instant have commenced, had not Gov. Denver risen and sternly rebuked Ransom for his interference, in the harmony of the proceedings. “ I have,” he said, “ adopted a policy, fair and honorable to both parties, to establish peace, and, when I have, with difficulty, succeeded, you come and throw a *fire-brand* to destroy all the good the carrying out of my policy would accomplish. Stand back ! ”

The *discomfited* Ransom slunk back, cowed by the firmness of the Gov., and the Judge recommenced his

remarks, which he was allowed to finish without further interruption. Ex-Gov. Robinson and a number of other speakers succeeded him, their moderate sentiments awakening no second outburst of the ruffians, but the fires were only *slumbering* and needed but a *breath* to blow them into flames. When the speaking concluded, the assemblage dispersed in every direction, but the feeling against the policy of the Gov. in no wise abated, and many a man slept on his arms that night in Fort Scott, not knowing what the next moment would bring forth.

The next day arrangements were entered into by the Gov. and the citizens of the town for the immediate carrying out of his policy. A day was set for the settlers of the county to assemble at Fort Scott, to elect new county officers, and the company of infantry stationed at the Fort, received orders to prepare for an immediate departure to the northern part of the Territory. There were many expressions of dissatisfaction, among the Fort gentry, at the course of the Gov., but his mind was made up and could not be diverted from its purpose.

The morning of June 16th, the Gov. and his suite left Fort Scott. They appeared to be in fine spirits, and on arriving at the Marmaton, some of the party indulged in the luxury of a bathe in its waters. The Gov. looked on, apparently enjoying the diversion, but



did not participate. On the south bank of the stream the company of infantry were encamped, waiting for the river to fall, to cross and proceed northward. The soldiers were engaged in pitching quoits, skipping stones across the water, or loitering idly on the bank of the river. As I noticed them at their various diversions, I could not help thinking what a great mistake Government committed in saddling such *drones* on persecuted Kansas. Upwards of \$4,000,000 has the establishment of the federal soldiery in Kansas cost the National Government, and from their first inception they have been more the *foes* than the protectors of the settlers. Nor is it strange ! The history of a hundred centuries demonstrates the fact that it is easier for the "Ethiop to change his skin," than for a standing troop ever to be the friend of freedom.

On arriving at the Little Osage, fifteen miles north of Fort Scott, an amusing incident occurred. The river was so swollen it was deemed unsafe to cross in the carriages, and one of the party swam across and secured an old Indian canoe on the opposite shore. The baggage of the party was placed in the canoe, and was about being paddled across, when the Governor concluded to go at the same time. He therefore placed himself in the end of the canoe, and desired those on shore to push the boat off. This, owing to the corpulency of the Governor, who is a large, fleshy man,

weighing considerably over two hundred pounds, was a task requiring no small power. It was finally accomplished, however, and the boat and its cargo launched in the Osage. It had proceeded but a few yards from shore, when the swift current caused it to roll, and in a moment the Governor was splashing in the water amid the trunks, portmanteaus, etc., to the amusement of the spectators. He showed considerable agility, and doubtless escaped better than he would be likely to if again placed in the same predicament. The residue of the party, fearful of being caught in the same manner, crossed by standing in their carriages.

The party arrived at Barnesville (a frontier town nearly due north of Fort Scott,) in season for dinner ; after which the Governor mixed among the people, freely conversing with them respecting their troubles, and learning their opinions as to the *cause* and *cure* of existing difficulties. Just before leaving the place a stranger rode into the town, who said that he was direct from the western part of Vernon Co., Missouri, and that Col. Titus was then in his neighborhood with some three hundred men, preparing for a fresh invasion of the Territory. It was known that Titus, with a body of men, was marching southward through Western Missouri, but it was not generally believed he meditated an invasion of the Territory, and there was

not much in the appearance of the stranger to strengthen the suspicion. He was nevertheless rather an intelligent man, and possessed the "gift of gab" to a great degree. He favored the Governor with a great deal of gratuitous advice respecting the existing troubles which, he said, if followed, would establish peace immediately. The most prominent feature of his advice was to declare martial law. As an inducement to the Governor to respond to his wishes, he said he would name his *next boy* for him. Important as was this *consideration*, a speech to the citizens convinced the stranger that the Governor did not consider the proposition a sufficient inducement to change his policy.

The party left the town soon after the conclusion of the Governor's speech, and journeyed until night-fall, when they put up at a settler's house for the night. The next morning they resumed their journey, and a ride of three or four miles brought them to Choteau's Trading Post.

Soon after their arrival, some of the party started for a pilgrimage to the "massacre ground," accompanied by old Mr. Hairgrove, one of the survivors of the tragedy. They passed over the desolate country until they came to the spot, some three or four miles from the Post. On arriving there Mr. Hairgrove related the particulars of the awful tragedy, stating the

position of the victims, their brutal murderers, etc. Towards the close of his description he said :—

“ There, where the earth is made porous by heart’s blood, died poor Stillwell ; and there the noble Colpetzer. There lay Mr. Ross, who was killed the first fire, but was afterwards shot, having been mistaken by the ruffians for Preacher Reed. There lay poor Campbell, whose pockets were searched before the spirit had fairly left the body.”

He also spoke of his son’s position, who was only wounded through the hand and jaw. The age of the younger Hairgrove is about twenty-eight, and he is a fine looking, intelligent person. He continued :—

“ My son and I crawled down the ravine to some timber, where we found a spring of water, which was a great relief to us. The position of the victims appeared still more awful to us in consequence of the large flocks of crows that hovered above their bloody corpses, screaming frightfully.”

It was a relief to have the old man stop narrating the awful scene. Said he, with choked utterance, and the tears streaming down his face, “ I consider myself a strong-hearted man, but the recollection of this affair makes me weak as a child.” The grass in the ravine where the victims bled was yellow and lifeless, while all around it waved green and luxuriantly.

The party returned to the Post in time for dinner,

after which the assembled settlers were addressed by the Governor, Robinson, Wright, Montgomery, and others. Gov. Denver recapitulated his articles of agreement, spoke of his visit to Fort Scott, made allusion to the massacre of their citizens, expressed his hopes that peace would soon be restored, etc., etc. Montgomery reiterated his speech on the Osage, his approval of the policy of the Governor, his willingness to leave the field, etc. ; and at a late hour the assemblage dispersed to their respective homes. The next day the Governor and suite departed for Lecompton.

The above is a brief and truthful account of the visit of Gov. Denver to Southern Kansas. It has been written without fear or favor, and with the sole desire to record the events of his mission as they really occurred. How far I have succeeded in impartially depicting them, I will leave those conversant with Kansas politics to judge. In common with the great mass of the settlers, at the time of the Governor's visit South, I entertained for his official career a high esteem. I saw him on more than one occasion, requiring promptness and energy, rise equal to the emergency, and rebuke the turbulent spirits around him ; and the respect I felt for the man ripened almost into admiration. His treatment too of Montgomery, without being marked, was such that the inference was fairly deducible that he regarded his career as *justi-*

*fiable* by circumstances, and appreciated his nobility of character. Judge then of my surprise in looking over a late issue of the *New-York Tribune*, to see a letter from Gov. Denver, called forth by an editorial of that paper on Kansas politics, in which misrepresentation of the most willful character followed misrepresentation all throughout the lengthy epistle. I do not purpose replying to any of its allegations, already so ably confuted by the journal in which it appeared, but I would ask the reader, who has met with the article, to contrast it with the official career of Gov. Denver while in Southern Kansas, and mark the *great discrepancy* between the two. If Gov. Denver was *sincere* in speech and action while South, he was *insincere* in his letter ; and on the other hand, if *honest* in the epistle, he acted *hypocritically* then. In either case I will leave the matter to his conscience and his Maker.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### A HORSE-BACK RIDE OVER THE BORDER.

“ Now saddle El Canalo—  
The freshening wind of morn,  
Down in the flowery vega,  
Is stirring through the corn ;  
The thin smoke of the ranches  
Grows red with coming day,  
And the steed's impatient stamping  
Is eager for the way ! ” —BAYARD TAYLOR.

NOTWITHSTANDING the hopes inspired in the bosoms of the settlers by the visit of the Governor, they were greatly agitated by fears of danger from another quarter. It was known that Col. Titus was encamped on the Missouri frontier with a large body of men, and rumors were daily borne over the border that he was waiting for a favorable opportunity to invade the Territory. These floating reports kept the country in a state of constant alarm, and seriously interfered with the permanent establishment of peace ; the settlers scarcely daring to pursue their daily avocations unarmed, or in an isolated manner, for fear of an attack. I had been desirous of making a tour through some of

the border counties of Missouri for some time, and I concluded I would satisfy myself of the uncertainty existing in regard to the purpose of Titus, by taking a ride to the neighborhood of his camp.

The morning of the 21st of June, I left the Osage for my contemplated journey. The animal I rode was an Indian pony—one of the best of that valuable breed—fleet, hardy and gentle. He did not look that morning as if equipped for merely a pleasure ride of a few hours. In front of the high-bowed trooper-saddle, holsters with a brace of heavy pistols were secured. A blanket, tightly rolled, and a pair of saddle-bags, containing some provision and a number of little essentials, were fastened on behind, and a lariat rope was coiled around his graceful neck. I bade good-bye to the friend who accompanied me a short distance, and keeping the timber of the Little Osage to my left, rode eastward in the direction of the Missouri line.

The day was auspicious. A storm the preceding night had purified the atmosphere, and the morning air blew fresh and invigoratingly over the prairies. The scenery, though tame, was graceful and pleasing. Plains too broad for the eye to compass, and variegated with beautiful flowers and undulating like gentle swells of the ocean, save where here and there the prairie would shoot up into bold prominence; and streams skirted by lines of wood and scattering groves,

were the chief components of the landscapes presented to my notice.

On I rode, keeping the Osage a few miles to the north of me, so as to head off the innumerable little streams and ravines putting into it, and yet be sufficiently near for it to be an index to my course. About noon I arrived at a small stream of running water near the line between Missouri and Kansas, where I stopped to rest and partake of some of the edibles in my saddle-bags. I lariatied out my horse where he could find plenty of good grass, and then proceeded to attend to my own creature necessities. I had unconsciously selected a spot of great beauty. The bank sloped moderately down to the stream, and scattered thickly among the luxuriant grass was a great variety of wild flowers. After finishing my repast, I threw myself upon the velvety sward to rest for a few moments before resuming my journey. The flowers around attracted my attention and wooed me to an examination of their loveliness. Although the offspring of a prairie solitude, their formation was fair and delicate, and their gorgeous colors comprised all the hues of the rainbow. One leading the life I had of necessity lead in the Territory, has little opportunity to cultivate a taste for the beautiful, or think of aught save the hazardous undertakings of the moment. Like the rude scenes by which he is surrounded, his feelings

grow hard and callous. A hundred times I had rode over kindred plants, crushing them without a thought, but that day they awakened memories in my mind that had long slumbered—memories of the time when I would have shrunk aghast could the vision of the part in life I have since played been then unfolded to me, and I blessed them for their teachings.

As I advanced into Missouri, the country became more thickly settled, but the habitations were of the poorest description, and the inmates were of the most squalid and filthy order. The quarters for the negroes were mere pens of logs, not half as comfortable or respectable as our northern farmers use for corn-houses and hog-pens. There was an occasional exception in the shape of some thrifty farm-house, evidently the habitation of some "Yankee Settler," but the buildings, as a class, wore a ruinous, thriftless look, sad to contemplate. They were almost invariably one story, with an open hall running through, separating the dwelling into two parts; one of which would be used as kitchen and sleeping room for the men, the other as parlor and bed-chamber for the women. It being the season for hoeing the corn crop, the slaves of the various plantations were nearly all in the fields at labor. I passed by one large plantation where there were twenty or twenty-five slaves in one field, all busied either in hoeing the green shoots, or

driving the team ; while the overseer, a young man, with a large straw hat to shade him from the sun, with whip in hand, sat on the fence leisurely observing their actions and occasionally speaking in a peremptory tone to some one of the negroes. A little further on, and screened from the observation of the overseer by an intervening strip of timber, I met a slave on horse-back, of whom I inquired the name of the owner of the plantation I had just passed.

“ O, dat’s Massa G—s,” he answered pleasantly, “ and I am one of his boys.”

“ Are all the negroes I see yonder his slaves ?”

“ Yes, sah ! and Massa G— owns heaps and heaps more of niggars ; tree oder plantations full ob slaves in oder places.”

“ Is he kind to you, this Massa G— ?”

“ Yes, sah ! Massa G— is for de most part. Massa G— do well enuf, but,” lowering his voice as he spoke and pointing in the direction of the field where the others were at work, “ datoberseer yonder, when anything go wrong wid poor niggars, is de berry d—l !”

“ You would like to be a freeman then, I suppose ?”

“ Yes, sah, deed I would ! Dinah and me has versed togeder about if de war went on, mebbe Massa Montgomery would come over wid his men and set all de niggars free, but day say dat peace is making up and dar’s no furder hope for de liberation ob poor Julius.”

I rode on and on, now leaving the Little Osage far to the north and pursuing a southward course through Vernon Co., agreeable to the instructions of those conversant with the situation of the camp of Titus. The country was not so rolling as I advanced southward, and the soil was of a darker, richer quality. The fields of wheat, oats, &c., promised an abundant harvest, and the orchards of apple, peach and cherry looked thrifty, and indicated a luxuriant yield of fruit.—Early cherries and apples were already ripe and were of the finest taste and flavor. I would occasionally stop my horse to converse with some of the more intelligent of the planters ; the most of whom appeared to be quietly disposed and to deprecate the ill-feeling existing between Missouri and the Territory. Occasionally I would meet with a genuine “border-ruffian,” who would seem disposed to pry rather closely into my business, but a hint that my mission was not of a communicative character, or a significant movement of my hand towards my pistol case, generally enabled me to get along without serious impediment.

I journeyed until night fall, when I stopped at the house of one of the apparently better class of settlers, and asked permission to remain over night. My request was readily granted, my horse was taken by one of the sons of the head of the household, and I was conducted by my host into the large sitting room of



the dwelling, and introduced to the family, consisting of his wife and several grown-up sons and daughters. The name of my kind entertainer was Gray. The family had emigrated from Western New York some six or seven years previous, and their sympathies were all on the side of freedom. Fully satisfying myself of their sincerity, I communicated to them something of my character, purpose in visiting Missouri, etc. They informed me that the camp of Titus was about ten miles south of them, but that of his intentions they were ignorant. They assured me that his course was disapproved of by many of the citizens, among whom a radical change was taking place on the subject of emancipation. I left this hospitable family early the next morning, and continued my journey southward. On parting I offered to compensate my host for the trouble I had occasioned his household, but he would not hear to receiving anything, and with many thanks I bade him and family a regretful adieu.

The morning was somewhat warmer than the one preceding it, but the heat was not unpleasant, and my steed being fresh I made rapid progress towards the place where Titus and his men were said to be encamped. It was nearly noon when I arrived in the vicinity of Drywood, a small stream flowing into the Osage, where Titus had last had his camp. My plan of procedure was to presume on a slight acquaintance

contracted with Col. Titus while in Kansas City, and openly claim the hospitality of his camp. Circumstances, however, entirely altered my preconceived policy. On arriving at the camping ground, which was situated in a cove of timber near Drywood, I found it deserted, save by a few belonging to the expedition, who were busied in loading the heavier camping furniture on some wagons preparatory to following the main body.

They were so intent on their employment that they did not notice my approach until I reined my horse in their very midst, and then, taking me for a new recruit to their company, they said :

“The camp broke up hours ago, and the men are miles ahead by this time, so if you wish to overtake them you must hurry on after them !”

I was about to reply, correcting the mistake I saw they labored under, when the idea occurred to me that by allowing them to think I was connected with the expedition I might possibly learn something of value respecting their future movements, and I accordingly made reply :

“Well, I don’t know whether it will pay to join your leader or not. I don’t know that I fairly understand what is to be done, any how. What are the first objects of the enterprise ?”

The person who appeared to be the leader in the

little party came to my side, and as he approached me, said :

“ I expect you are a *friend* to our company, but I may as well be sure of the fact,” and threw me a sign then customary in all the secret orders of Western Missouri.

Fortunately for me I had learned its counterpart, in common with a number of others, a short time previous, of a Free State settler, who had several brothers in Missouri, and I was thus able to return the secret test of brotherhood.

“ You are really ignorant then of the purpose of our company ?” he inquired.

“ I am,” I responded, “ entirely ignorant.”

“ I will tell you, then,” he replied, “ all that I myself know. We expect soon to be joined by Capt. Hamilton and his party, who are to come up the Arkansas river. We will then proceed to Arizona, which our leader, Hamilton, and others, say they are determined to make a *Slave State* at all hazards. They say that the “abolitionists” got ahead of them in Kansas, but they defy them to compete with them in Arizona. You had better join us for we also mean to make it pay. We are going to try the mines first, and if mining don’t pay, we are going South to Sonora and other places, and plunder the rich churches and convents.”

I told him that I could not possibly join that day, but I would think the matter over, and if I concluded to accompany them, I would follow and overtake them on the morrow.

"You had better come," said he, as I rode off, "we will have rare sport before the 'States' see us again."

"Perhaps I may," said I, and thus closed my first and last interview with the followers of the notorious Col. Titus.

After leaving the deserted camp, I turned my horse's head northward, and allowed him to give full vent to the superabundant spirits I had been compelled to more or less restrain ever since I first vaulted into the saddle the morning of my departure. Well throughout that long afternoon did he sustain the vaunted endurance of his breed. No whip or spur was needed to quicken his speed, but whether on level plain or crossing dangerous ravine, his fleet lope, unchecked by bridle-rein, would have been the same. Even when the light foam flew from his nostrils, and I reined him in from sympathy for his heated condition, he chafed under the restraint and would gladly have resumed his native gallop.

Night set in when I was within a mile or two of the line where I intended crossing into the Territory, and I had as yet met with no habitation of the class I hoped to meet with to receive me for the night. All

the buildings I had passed in the last two hours' ride had been the filthy, wretched dwellings of the native Missourians, and I knew by experience the character of the inmates of such tenements, but the rapid approach of darkness made the necessity of some shelter apparent, and I at last approached a house of rather more promising exterior than those I had been passing ; hitched my horse to an adjacent tree, and knocked for admittance. The house was some distance from the road-side and near a strip of timber. Quite an uproar burst from the inmates simultaneously with my knock, which prevented it from being heard. In the burst of merriment I recognized the voices of several men. I stepped back from the door, approached its one front window, and looked within. A wild, rude scene was revealed to my gaze. Around a plain deal table were seated three or four men, engaged in playing cards. On the table was a large jug, around which were several glasses filled with liquor of some description, and between which and the lips of the men there seemed to exist an intercourse of the most friendly character. In one corner of the room several rifles leaned against the rude logs composing the building. An old hag of a woman, stirring something over an open fire, completed the view. A very brief inspection of the interior of the dwelling *satisfied* me, and without repeating my demand for admittance, I

noiselessly as possible remounted my horse and rode from the place.

I walked my horse a mile or so through the darkness, when I entered a small strip of timber, where I concluded I would remain until morning. I dismounted, removed my blanket and saddle-bags from the horse ; took off the saddle, and led him a short distance to where he could get plenty of both grass and water. I then returned, and with some matches and dry twigs, soon had a good fire blazing. I had some provisions still remaining in my saddle-bags, which I drew forth, and after eating heartily, still had a small quantity left for morning. The only drawback to my comparative comfort was the fear I entertained of being overcome by slumber and attacked by the wolves that infest the prairies, while in a defenceless state. It was not that harmless little animal called the prairie wolf I feared—they though troublesome are never dangerous ; but there are other beasts that at night steal forth from their haunts and roam the prairie, far more formidable in aspect and character. These are the large white and gray wolves, and their deep howl when heard is suggestive of something far from pleasant. They are quite scarce in Kansas, but are occasionally seen, and when fierce and desperate by starvation, have been known to attack the settlers. I gathered in a sufficient quantity of wood to keep up



a fire till morning ; brought my horse close to the blaze, where he would be secure, and resigned myself to a night of vigil. My situation was by no means an enviable one. The night was chill, damp, and dark, a heavy dew falling, and the air blowing coolly from the prairies. Sleep also frequently almost overcame me, and I was forced to think of nearly all the expedients of which I had ever heard to keep awake. I relived former scenes of pleasure, recalled familiar faces to memory, and pictured in fancy their far-distant and widely different situations. A stillness, almost to oppression, reigned over the solitary place save when the howl of some roaming wolf would break upon the quietude of nature with startling distinctness. All throughout the summer night I kept vigil, and gladly did I welcome the first faint streaks of light in the east that betokened the coming dawn. I then picketed my horse out to graze, and while he was snatching a hurried breakfast, finished the scanty remains of my wallet. Ere the sun had risen I was in the saddle, and a sharp ride of half an hour bore me beyond the border and in the Territory.

I rode slowly over the familiar plains I had passed in the commencement of my journey, and about sunset once more drew rein in the village of Raysville. My horse was taken care of by one of the villagers, and after partaking of some refreshments,

I retired to obtain some rest after the fatigues of the journey.

I had been asleep perhaps two or three hours, when I was awakened by the heavy tramp of horses and the loud sounds of voices, apparently in front of the house. It proved to be Sheriff Roberts of Fort Scott, who, with a posse, was in pursuit of some Jayhawkers who had stolen some horses of a settler living near Fort Scott. The party remained over night at Raysville, and the room in which I slept was soon crowded with the members of the posse, who by their conversation, jokes, etc., prevented me from getting much sleep the remainder of the night.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## P E A C E   E S T A B L I S H E D .

“ The warfare of the border  
Long waged, at last did cease,  
And all the fair land over  
Waved the white wings of peace.”—ANONYMOUS.

THE stipulations of the Governor were rigidly adhered to by the Free State settlers of Southern Kansas. Capt. Montgomery disbanded his men immediately after the departure of the Governor, and retired from the field. The citizens of Bourbon Co. assembled at Fort Scott on the day specified, and entered into an election for county officers, which, notwithstanding the exertions of the denizens of the Fort, resulted in the election of Free State officers throughout. The articles of the agreement relative to the establishment of military out-posts along the line was also faithfully carried out. Major Weaver was instructed to station himself at Choteau's Trading Post, and enlist a sufficient number of men to insure the protection of the settlers against future invasions, by

the Missourians, of the Territory. The troops of the Fort had gone northward, and the policy of the Gov. had thus been carried out in every particular.

The result of these wise and beneficial measures, although highly gratifying to the long harassed settlers, were occasionally alloyed by circumstances of an unpleasant character. The one that menaced the harmony of the existing relations between Missouri and the Territory to the greatest extent, was the unprovoked assassination of a Free State settler by a gang of border ruffians. The circumstances of the case are briefly as follow :

Two Free State men, by the name of Harris and Pope, who resided on the Little Osage, had their horses stolen from them by a party of maurauding Missourians. They pursued them over the border in the hope of recovering their property, and when near Papinsville, Bates Co., they were taken prisoners by the plundering party, conveyed to a wood near at hand, and deliberately shot down and left for dead. One was instantly killed by the first volley, but the other, although receiving two balls in his person, finally recovered consciousness and managed to make his way back again into the Territory. Again the Little Osage was visited, and after the second foray of Missourians, an earnest request was sent Montgomery to return to the Osage, if it was but for a brief period,

to give them the benefit of his *name*. He returned answer that he had pledged his word to the Governor to leave the field, and he would not take up arms unless the Pro-Slavery party grossly violated the treaty made by him.

Another circumstance occurring shortly after, illustrates even more strikingly the nice sense of honor possessed by Montgomery. An old follower of Montgomery's, by the name of Marshall, had been arrested by the civil authorities of the Fort *on an old writ*, conveyed to that place and kept in custody. The settlers of the Osage, where Marshall lived, were highly indignant at this procedure of their Fort Scott neighbors, regarding it as a pointed insult and a desire on their part to renew hostilities, and sent a hasty message to Montgomery requesting his presence on the Osage. Montgomery hurried down and found the settlers in a state of great excitement. They considered that this gross breach of faith on the part of their old enemies absolved them from their allegiance to the treaty, and urged Montgomery to once more take the field, pledging him their olden devotion to his standard if he would accede to their wishes. Instead of yielding to their requests, Montgomery indited a note to the proper officer of the Fort, informing him of the *breach of faith* in the arrest of young Marshall, hinting at the *probable consequence* of a refusal to re-

lease him, etc., which he despatched by a trusty messenger to Fort Scott, and in less than twenty-four hours Marshall was once more on the Osage. A renewal of hostilities was thus prevented by the politic course of Montgomery, plainly proving that he preferred *honorable peace* when it could be preserved, to the evils of guerrilla warfare.

About this time an incident worthy of note occurred on the frontier of Linn Co. A few Free State men, under command of Snyder, the hero of the Marais des Cygnes massacre, went to Missouri, to search for a man by the name of Mattock, whom he at the time recognized as one of the perpetrators of the tragedy mentioned. They proceeded into the State about twelve miles, when they arrived at the place where he made his home. Not finding him in the house, they proceeded to the barn, where they found him asleep on some hay, with a bowie-knife by his side, and a Colt's revolver under his head. One of Snyder's party then stood over him with a rifle pointed at his breast, while another awoke him. On awakening, he grasped his revolver, but on realizing the situation in which he was placed, he reluctantly gave himself up a prisoner. The party then returned to the Territory without encountering any danger in the bold exploit. The prisoner was conducted to Paris, Linn Co., where he was confined in the log jail, heavily chained and



closely guarded. A few weeks after his imprisonment some individuals made an attempt to take him out and lynch him, but the citizens of the county, evincing that disposition which has ever characterized the Free State party, and is so adverse to the fiendish policy pursued by their Pro-Slavery antagonists, interfered, and prevented the violent intentions of the lynchers from being executed. At first he denied all complicity with the ruffians of Hamilton, but on being confronted by one of the wounded men, he confessed to being in the party, but denied participating in the fatal fire. I visited him in his prison and learned the particulars of the Post tragedy, and the proceedings of Capt. Hamilton, previous to and since the massacre, from his own lips.

The great change in Fort Scott, and the vigilant guard kept up by Major Weaver and the various companies along the line, soon inspired the settlers with a sense of security, and they hastened to repair as much as possible the loss they had sustained by not getting in their spring crops in season, in consequence of difficulties then existing. That loss was greater than those unacquainted with the limited dependencies of the frontier settler would suppose. Indian corn, the chief support of the squatter, had been planted in but few places when serious disturbances commenced in Southern Kansas, and by the time peace was restored

it had grown so late that in all places where the ground was unprepared to receive the crop, it could not be got in readiness in season for the seed to ripen into maturity. Hence, in many localities, but a small portion of land was planted with that almost indispensable article of food in a new country. The scattering patches of wheat, owing to the inattention paid them by their owners, who were forced to think only of their own protection, were trampled down by the horses and cattle running wild on the prairie, and in many cases rendered unfit for use. Manfully the settlers strove to overcome these disadvantages, and though they partially succeeded, grim poverty must hang close around many a squatter's home in Kansas the coming winter.

All throughout the month of June, emigration flowed rapidly into the Southern part of the Territory, and the change wrought in the appearance of things by the few weeks following the cessation of difficulties, was almost magical. The deserted cabins once more wore the look of life ; the broken doors and dilapidated fences were repaired ; the gardens cleaned of their noxious weeds and made productive of the wants of the settler, and the prairie surrounding his habitation made to "blossom as the rose." New homes and new towns also commenced dotting the prairies in all directions, and the sharp ring of the woodman's axe,

the quick "gee-ho" of the teamster, and the steady hammer of the carpenter, was heard upon the prairies and along the water-courses of Kansas from early morn till dusk of eventide. The new comers were generally persons of some means, and as their money passed into the hands of the settlers, in exchange for the natural wants of the household, a vitality and spirit was imparted to the trade and business of the growing Territory.

As time passed, in various parts of the Territory, preparations were made for the celebration of the rapidly approaching anniversary of American Independence. The settlers of Kansas, although struggling against adverse circumstances for subsistence, felt that they could not allow the day, dear to every American, to pass without testifying their thanks for their happy release from long-endured persecution, and accordingly commenced making arrangements for its celebration, in a manner suited to their straightened means and circumstances.

The settlers in the vicinity of Sugar Mound selected the Mound itself as the place for their convocation, and on the very ground where Gen. Clarke encamped his men in '56, the assembled settlers commemorated the anniversary of our country's liberty, and rejoiced in the triumph of the principles of their forefathers on the disputed soil of Kansas. The Fourth coming on

the Sabbath, the citizens of Linn Co. held their celebration the third, and the day being favorable, several hundreds of the inhabitants of Linn and adjoining counties were in attendance. Capt. Montgomery was one of the invited speakers, and as he mounted the platform, amid the cheers of the assemblage, what marvel if across his mind swept a recollection of the time, when on that very spot, he confronted the haughty Clarke, and was forced to flee for his life ! His speech was such as the scene and the growing, hopeful condition of the Territory would naturally inspire. He spoke of the happy termination of difficulties ; of the thanks due to the Great Supreme for vouchsafing to them the blessings of peace ; of the importance of the settlers turning their attention to establishing schools for the education of their children ; of the need of churches, a regular ministry, etc. Several other addresses were pronounced by invited speakers : one of which, delivered by the Mr. Danford before alluded to, was particularly eloquent and appropriate. At a late hour of the day the assemblage dispersed to their respective homes, highly gratified with the proceedings of the Celebration.

But gratifying as was the observance of the Fourth at Sugar Mound to the settlers of Southern Kansas, its celebration the Monday following, at Raysville, Bourbon Co., greatly eclipsed it in numbers and in-

terest. The patriotism which inspired the settlers of the Osage during the gloomy period of their history, strikingly manifested itself in the *double* celebration of the time-honored principles of their fathers and their own deliverance from long-endured tyranny.

Early on the morning of July 5th, the slumbers of the good citizens of the Little Osage were suddenly broken by some of the already assembled freemen on the ground of the celebration, who were giving vent to their patriotism by firing a national salute from a small cannon they had secured for the occasion. The sun had scarcely risen above the green slopes of the prairie, when in every direction might be seen the beauty and strength of Northern Bourbon Co., coming on horse-back and in wagons, to celebrate the anniversary of our country's liberty.

The first ceremonial of the day was one of an affecting and highly interesting character. It was the presentation of a suit of new clothes to Capt. Montgomery by the ladies of the Little Osage. The presentation was performed by Mrs. H. G. Moore in a graceful manner, who added a few well-timed remarks, to the effect that as he had worn out his clothes in their defence, it was their duty as well as pleasure to present him with a new apparel, and, on behalf of the ladies of the Osage, begged him to accept the gift as a slight testimonial of their esteem, etc., etc.

The man who had stood undaunted, calm, and resolute in many a scene of danger and infused in the followers around him a portion of his own fearless bravery, was visibly affected at thus hearing his praises from the grateful lips of woman. On receiving the offering he responded in a speech of brief duration, evincing deep emotions and feelings of the tenderest kind. The ceremony occurred at an early hour, and was witnessed by hundreds of spectators, who gave evidence, by the wrapt attention they paid to the proceedings, that they fully approved and appreciated the act. It was a proud day for the friends and followers of Montgomery, to see the man they loved and respected thus publicly honored by the grateful populace, but while their countenances reflected the joy of their hearts, his alone wore the olden look of placid dignity.

The procession formed at 10 a. m., under the direction of H. G. Moore, as Chief Marshal, marching to a beautiful grove near Raysville. Prayer was offered to the Throne of Mercies by Rev. J. Marr. The Declaration of Independence was read by D. B. Jackman, Esq. The oration of the day was pronounced by A. B. Danford, of Linn Co., which in style and matter fully equalled the most sanguine expectations of his many warm admirers. The dinner was served up in the rear of the grove, and was of a character to do



credit to the ladies, the committee of arrangement, and all concerned. As a thing noticable in the dinner procession, I will *privately* inform the reader that Judge Williams of the 3d Judicial district, so far forgot his *dignity* that he walked to the table arm in arm with James Montgomery, without appearing to think that he was demeaned by such a close proximity to so *notorious* an individual. After the wants of the *inner man* were satisfied and the cloth removed, the *intellectual man* was treated to a lengthy feast of toasts, responses, repartees, etc.

Nothing occurred to mar the harmony of the proceedings or cast the least shadow of gloom over the day's festivities. Numbers were in attendance from distant parts of the Territory and Western Missouri, and in all the number of people assembled could not have been much less than a thousand.

The celebration broke up by singing, to the tune of Old Hundred :

“ From all that dwell below the skies  
Let the Redeemer's praise arise ;  
Let the Redeemer's name be sung  
Through every land, by every tongue.”

Before the last rays of old Sol departed from the valley of the Osage, the enlivening sounds of music were heard in the large, new hall just erected by the

enterprising brothers Ray, where the "light fantastic toe" was tripping itself in the merriest manner. There was not the splendor and glitter of the eastern ball-room that summer night on the fair bank of the Osage, but there was "beauty unadorned" and "manly worth," and as happy hearts beat beneath the spotless muslin and simple linen, as ever throbbed under the richest silk, or most glossy broadcloth. The "wee small hours of morn" came and passed unheeded by the merry dancers, and nothing but the approach of day itself broke up one of the largest and most pleasant balls ever held in Bourbon Co.

Emigration continued to flow rapidly into the Southern part of the Territory, and the most desirable claims near and along the timbered streams of the country, were rapidly taken up by the new comers. Many of these emigrants were young men, without families, who came to Kansas to secure homes for themselves while plenty of good land was still remaining in the hands of the government. Nearly all were looking forward to an early settlement in life with that *loved one*, either in flesh and blood being, or in Utopia. The life that some of them led was rude and primitive enough to satisfy the most abstemious anchorite. To withdraw the curtain and give the reader a peep into pioneer life in Kansas, I will briefly sketch a few actual scenes falling under my own observation.

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While a follower of the standard of Montgomery in Bourbon Co., I received an invitation from a comrade in arms to pay him a visit as soon as the difficulties ceased, at his bachelor cabin, on the head-waters of the Osage. Having a fellow sympathy for his *forlorn* condition, I concluded I would see how he got along without "man's last best gift," and accordingly made arrangements, one afternoon late in July, to pay him a visit. His claim being but a few miles from where I was staying, I started on foot for his residence. It was one of the warmest afternoons of that hot month. Not a breath of air was stirring over the open prairie. The clouds were like light piles of cotton, and where the blue sky was visible it wore a hazy and fleecy aspect. The sun beat down with a fiery heat, browning the long grass of the plains, and curling the tall, green corn that in patches dotted the prairies. I walked slowly over the arid plain lying between Mine Creek and the Osage, and late in the afternoon arrived at the little cabin of my friend. It was pleasantly situated on a gentle elevation, a short distance from the Little Osage, and was built of rough, hewn logs, the interstices being filled up with some species of mortar. I found him within doors, suffering from a slight attack of the ague and from a *severe visitation of home sickness*; the latter of which maladies, however, he would not acknowledge to possessing, but it

was plainly visible in the hollowness of his once rounded, handsome face, and in the dejection which marked the tone in which he replied to my inquiry whether he had received any late news from the east.

Poor R—— ! his case was by no means an unusual one. One night, when the spirit of the past was busy with him and his heart yearned for sympathy, he told me the story of his life. It was the same old tale of love which, however reproduced, never palls or loses its pristine Eden glow with the changeful actors in the drama. He was a native of one of the New England States, and a graduate of one of her universities. At the time of the conception of the Lecompton Constitution he was betrothed to a young lady who, in every way, appeared to return his passion, and with whom he had been acquainted from childhood. They were to have been married early in the spring, but he was an ardent sympathizer with the harassed freemen of Kansas, and foreseeing the ordeal to which the passage of that obnoxious instrument would subject the settlers, he conceived it to be his duty to make that distracted land his home until it was freed from the persecutions of its enemies. He accordingly waited on the object of his affections, informed her of his intentions for the future, stated the motives which actuated him, and begged her permission to have their marriage deferred for a few months, until he could

return with a satisfied conscience and fulfill his engagement. The heart of the imperious beauty but illy responded to his eloquent expressions of patriotism, and when he concluded his appeal to her feelings, she coldly told him that he was still free and at liberty to go wherever he chose, but if he carried out his insane purpose of going to Kansas, she would consider their engagement at once and forever at an end. The ardent lover tried every inducement he could think of to shake her determination, assuring her that nothing but an unalterable sense of duty impelled him to such a step ; that his sorrow at the necessity was not less than her's, etc., but all to no avail, and after many fruitless attempts to soften her obduracy, he left her presence, sad and wretched at the willfulness of his mistress, but unshaken in his avowed purpose. Mutual friends endeavored to heal the breach between the unhappy lovers, but without success. The lady was proud and refused to recede from a position she, in a moment of pique, had taken, and the lofty purpose of the young man, long in conceiving, was unalterable in character.

Early in March he left his New England home, since which period he had never directly heard from the loved one still enshrined in memory ; and only rarely and at long intervals from any of his friends and relatives. During the difficulties, and while actively

employed, he managed to subdue his feelings with tolerable success, and on more than one occasion he gave ample evidence that the blood of his revolutionary sires still coursed in unimpaired vigor through his veins ; but when peace was secured, and he retired to the seclusion of his humble cabin, his feelings gradually assumed a more melancholy character. He possessed a fine mind, and the few choice works he had taken from New England, were his greatest sources of consolation.

He gave me a cordial greeting, and drew forth from a corner of the cabin a home-made stool for my use. As he handed it to me, he said in his olden happy manner that he would apologize for the meagreness of his cabin comforts, only he knew that like him, I cared nothing for the superfluities of life. We drew our chairs in front of the open door, commanding a splendid view of the winding Osage, and soon were in the midst of an interesting conversation. The sun was obscured, and the heat of the day was less intense. While we talked, the air began to grow fresh and cool ; the timber of the Osage to frown gloomily, while ever and anon there was a low muttering of thunder from the dense, black masses of clouds that overspread the western sky. For a time they were fringed with silver by the declining sun, but soon the thick pall stretched over the whole heaven,



and the prairie around us was wrapped in deep gloom. The long grass at the edge of the river bent and rose mournfully with the rising gusts. Soon the storm broke. It came with a hurricane that swept resistlessly over the prairie, dashing cataracts of water to the plain, and accompanied by sharp zig-zag flashes of lightning, and stunning terrific peals of thunder. The long grass was levelled to the earth, and the firm rooted trees skirting the Osage, bowed like reeds before the tempest. The first burst of the storm soon passed over, but for a long time the rain poured steadily. At length the clouds broke apart, the sky cleared in the West, and through the leafy boughs of the trees we saw the sun setting in a flood of crimson behind the distant prairie; the broad restless bosom of the river was suffused with deep red, and the foliage of its skirting trees was crowned with the same fiery hue. Ere long it passed away, and gloom and darkness reigned over the quiet valley of the Osage.

My friend enjoyed the grand and terrible scene I have briefly depicted so highly, that he could not refrain from occasionally giving vent to his over-wrought feelings by some expression of admiration, or apt quotation suggested to his poetic nature by the warring of the elements. When the storm was at its height I heard him repeating some of the most sublime passages of *Childe Harold*, and when at last the clouds

drew apart, and a flood of sunbeams streamed along the prairie, he turned to me with a face glowing with enthusiasm, and said :

“ See, how like a legion of evil spirits yon array of clouds is broken and scattered ! Is not this storm typical of the future of Kansas ? The clouds which have so long overspread the political sky have disappeared, and like yon beauteous arch, spanning the prairie from North to South, the bow of peace smiles over the length and breadth of this long distracted land ! ”

“ Yes,” I replied, “ but while yon glorious arch is fleeting and perishable, may the smiles of the bow of peace endure and beautify to the end of time ! ”

“ Amen,” responded my friend, “ but while we are losing ourselves in the speculative realms of fancy, I forget that you have not yet been to supper, and stand in need of nourishment.”

I would have entered a protest to this, but my walk had given me an appetite such as I had not had for days, and I therefore remained silent. My friend bustled around the small room ; kindled a fire to boil some coffee, placed a frying-pan over the coals to cook some batter-cakes, which he had previously mixed up, cut a few slices of bacon to fry, etc. While the cooking was going on, he set out his table, (an old store-box,) in the middle of the room, placed a couple of

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cracked plates, a half-broken sugar bowl, a dish with a lump of butter, and two tea-cups, minus a saucer, thereon ; and as the articles before the fire were cooked, they were brought to the table, and supper was declared in readiness. We drew our chairs to the rude board and did ample justice to the food before us. I could not avoid complimenting R— on his skill in serving up a meal. The coffee was of an excellent flavor, the cakes were done to a nicety, and the bacon was of the right brownness. As with all his searching he could only muster one case-knife, he in courtesy gave that to me, and brought his pocket-knife into requisition the residue of the meal. The cakes *unaccountably* all disappearing, R— was forced to once more turn cook, and as he baked, he was compelled, in the absence of a spare dish, to deposit the cakes on the top of the box, much to his apparent mortification. He laughingly assured me that he would certainly have to make an addition to his outset so that he could entertain his friends in a manner more conformable to received usage. Still with all these little untoward incidents we got along admirably, and never in the abodes of comfort and luxury did I more thoroughly enjoy a meal. After supper we drew our chairs to the open door of the cabin. The night was still warm, but occasionally a wandering breeze came gratefully to our heated brows, bearing with it a perfume of

roses from the distant prairie. In that quiet hour the scent of familiar flowers awoke in the mind strange memories of home, and our conversation insensibly lapsed into silence. As we sat enjoying the growing coolness of the evening, far off beyond the black outline of the prairie appeared a ruddy light, steadily increasing like the glow of a conflagration; until finally the broad disk of the moon, blood-red and greatly magnified by vapors, rose above the darkness of the prairie. We retained our positions until a late hour of the night, chatting over past adventures and enjoying the almost fairy beauty of the moonlit scenery, when we retired to rest.

In the morning while at breakfast a neighbor stopped at the door and handed R— a letter. He had been at the office the day before, when he received it, but it was late when he passed by, and he thought he would not waken him up. I saw R—'s countenance brighten when he glanced at the superscription, and it was not many minutes before he had broken the seal, and was deep in its contents.

“W—,” said he at length, in his quiet manner of speaking, “I am going to start for the east to-morrow.”

“To-morrow!” repeated I in amazement. “Why, what sudden whim has seized you? What will you do with your claim?”

“O, hang the claim, I’m done with it ; you, or any one else may have it ! I would not stay in Kansas another week for all the claims on the Osage !”

Wondering more than ever at the unusual excitement of my friend, I begged him to explain himself.

“Here,” said he, “I think I may confide my joy to you,” and he threw me the letter he had just perused.

It was from his old betrothed. It was a true woman’s letter. It implored him to forgive the past and her foolish pride ; it spoke of the misery she had since suffered ; of the anxiety with which she had looked over the latest intelligence from Kansas, etc., and closed by beseeching him to return immediately. I glanced over it, and returned it to the now radiant R—, saying :

“Go, my friend, by all means, but in your happiness think occasionally of him, the *poor Romeo who has no Juliet to hasten his return.*”

“I will, I will !” he replied, “and I shall look for you to some day pay me a visit in my New England home, where I will promise you a *better cook* and better fare than you have received from my hands on this occasion.”

As he had considerable business to attend to previous to his departure, I shortly after took my leave and returned to the place from whence I started the day previous. The next morning, agreeable to arrange-

ment, I met him at a stoppage of the stage-coach to bid him a final good-bye. Notwithstanding he was going to meet the "object most loved on earth," he was visibly affected, and when the driver cracked up his leaders for starting, his fervent pressure of the hand and hearty "God bless you," brought an unusual moisture to my eyes. I never heard from him afterwards, and pursuing our separate ways of life we may never meet again on earth, but should these lines by chance meet his eye, well do I know they will recall vividly to recollection the many, many hours we spent together while brothers in arms, making the "saddle and green wood" our home.

Several days after the visit above related, I was invited to accompany two or three gentlemen, who had some business to transact in the western part of Bourbon Co. We performed the journey on horse-back, and had a pleasant trip throughout. All along the route we traversed, the most surprising and magical changes were taking place in the appearance of the country. The prairies were dotted over with cabins and the improvements of the settlers, and in places favorably located, towns were building up with astonishing rapidity. Moneka, Mound City, Raysville, etc., were making rapid advancements in growth and business. When I first visited Mound City, it only contained two houses on the town site, but at the time of



which I write, private dwellings, business houses, etc., were going up in all parts of the town. Not less striking was the improvement taking place in Raysville. The heavy emigration flowing into the Territory gave an impetus to all kinds of business, and everything wore a thriving, prosperous look. Some of the party were old settlers, and the time passed very pleasantly in conversation on the gratifying changes taking place in the Territory. Late in the afternoon we arrived at the cabin of a settler with whom some of the company were acquainted. He invited us to remain over night with him, and as the weather looked unfavorable for night journeying, my friends deemed it prudent to accept the friendly invitation.

We were ushered into the one room of the house and regularly introduced to the wife of our host. The host himself was very talkative, and soon made us acquainted with the prominent events of his life. He was a native of the State of New Jersey, and was for more than a third of a century a follower of the seas. He had been to almost every part of the globe where our vessels sail. Tiring of the "life spent on the ocean wave," he went to Kansas for the same reason he went to sea—because of the excitement and danger attending that hazardous life. He is a model landlord, keeping travelers from motives of pure hospitality, and invariably refusing all pay when offered. He

lives in an open log-house with a loose floor ; enjoys himself after the fashion of pioneers, and boasts of his claim as being one of the finest in Kansas. His wife bustled around, and soon had a good supper of strong coffee, batter-cakes and fried bacon in readiness. After doing full justice to the repast, we withdrew from the table to the open door of the cabin, where our host entertained us with reminiscences of his sea-life until a late hour.

Our hostess then informed us that our beds were in readiness, and we commenced arrangements for retiring. The beds designed for our accommodation were in the loft of the building. The mode of reaching the loft was as follows.—A chair was placed in the centre of the room, on which those who were to lodge in the second story, would place themselves one at a time, and while the others steadied the chair, put one foot on the top of the back, and spring up into the loft, which only extended half way across the building. This process of *rising in the world* was somewhat difficult and highly amusing. One of the party, a short, corpulent man, after several feints and flutterings of his *wings* to buoy himself for the flight, sprung nervously for the overhanging joist, which he succeeded in grasping, but being unable to lift his ponderous form to a level with the loft, he hung dangling to the beam, afraid to recede and unable to advance. His

unpleasant but laughable position elicited burst after burst of merriment from the various members of the party, but knowing that he could not long retain his hold, two of the company finally caught hold of his struggling legs, and assisted by a comrade in the chair, hoisted the unlucky wight up into the loft. As soon as he regained his breath, he swore that he would never be caught in such a fix again, if he had to sleep on the open prairie as the only alternative. But the tribulations of the company were not yet over. The floor of the loft was loose, and every once in a while some one of the party would unexpectedly come very nearly meeting with a downfall. The beds were formed of a few blankets spread over the loose boards, with saddles for pillows. There was no protection to the front side of the loft, and considerable controversy arose as to which should occupy the outside place. Some were for giving the post to the fleshy doctor on account of his great bulk being less likely to be displaced than that of his companions, but he objected to the arrangement on the ground that he might be pushed out, and falling such a distance, *his great weight* would make a catastrophe of a serious character inevitable, and there would be no surgeon to attend to his ailments; whereas, if some other member of the party occupied the dangerous position, and should chance to fall out and meet with a severe accident, he

being a physician, could fix him up in a short time, and no great loss be experienced. The reasons of the fat Esculapian being unanswerable, the party consented to excuse him ; and a volunteer offering to *martyrize* himself by taking the dangerous position, the matter was amicably settled. Everything being thus satisfactorily arranged, all betook themselves to rest, and slept safe and sound till morning. Before getting up a vote of thanks was tendered to the *hero* who volunteered in defence of the party, on motion of the fleshy doctor, when we descended to the lower room, glad to be once more so near terra firma.

Soon after performing our ablutions we were summoned by our hostess to an excellent breakfast, to which we did ample justice. The good-humored host, during the repast, made frequent allusions to our adventures the night previous, and the plethoric doctor bore the many jokes about his *suicidal attempt* with unruffled good nature. At an early hour of the morning we bade our entertainers good-bye and resumed our journey. The business which some of the party had to transact was of an easily arranged character, and after completing it, we retraced our steps, arriving at our stopping places before nightfall.

The day set for the vote on the Lecompton Constitution at length arrived. After the first burst of indignation at the passage of the English Bill had sub-

sided throughout the Territory, but little was said concerning the approaching election ; and the enemies of freedom pleased themselves with the idea that a familiarity with the specious provisions of the bill had rendered it less repugnant to the settlers, but they forgot that *devotion to the cause of freedom had ever been the characteristic* of the freemen of Kansas. The offer of admission into the Union, coupled with the disgraceful terms of the bill, possessed no temptation to induce them to swerve from their olden loyalty to liberty ; and the alternative, ardently as they desired admission into the Confederacy of States, was gladly accepted in preference to such infamy.

The latter part of July, ex-Secretary Stanton made a tour of the Southern portion of the Territory, speaking at one or more places in every county. He attracted large crowds of people wherever he went, and his speeches were characterized by the logic and eloquence for which he is so deservedly celebrated. He encountered many difficulties in his journey through Southern Kansas. He traveled by private conveyance, and the roads being bad and the streams in many parts of the Territory swollen so as to be unfordable, he was frequently delayed and compelled to travel at night to fulfill his announced appointments. The obstacles he not unfrequently met with would have deterred many men from attempting to meet his numerous en-

gagements ; but the indomitable energy of Stanton surmounted all difficulties, and in a canvass of three-fourths of the inhabitable portion of the Territory he failed to fulfill only two of his many appointments. On one occasion, he, in the darkness of the night, drove into a quag-mire, and mired down one of his horses beyond the power of extricating the animal from his dangerous situation. He was without a companion, and as he could not leave his horses, he was obliged to remain all night on the open prairie. In the morning his unpleasant situation was discovered by a passing hunter, and by their united exertions, the horses were released, and the belated traveler enabled to resume his journey. On arriving at Paris, Linn Co., where he was next to speak, he gave a humorous account of his accident the preceding night, and said that the pledges he made the freemen of Kansas—that if the Lecompton Constitution was not submitted to the people for their acceptance or rejection, he himself would unite with them and assist in killing the bill—he meant to carry out so long as strength was left him to lift his voice against the swindle.

The day for the vote on the Lecompton Constitution, the 2d of August, was ushered in under circumstances of a highly unfavorable character. A severe and long continued storm the week preceding the day of the election had swollen the streams so that they were



utterly impassable in many places ; and this, coupled with the remoteness of the settlers in the sparsely settled portions of the Territory from the polls, prevented hundreds of voters from exercising the elective franchise. Of such vital importance to their future welfare, however, was the " Proposition " truly considered by the freemen of Kansas, that in many localities the greatest possible exertions were made to poll as full a vote as could by any expedient be brought to the places of election. Horses were lent to those who had none of their own, and everything within the limited means of the friends of freedom was willingly done to overcome, as much as possible, the adverse circumstances by which they were surrounded. Still, with all their exertions, the vote in many places was small to what it would otherwise have been ; and in the Southern part of the Territory, where the rivers are deep and dangerous, quite a number of settlers lost their lives in fording the treacherous streams of the country, either in going to, or returning from the various places of election. Along the Neosho several lives were lost in this manner ; the Marmaton and the Osage swallowed up in their swift rushing waters the forms of at least four martyrs to principle, and sad and lonely was more than one cabin home made by the fatal *Marais des Cygnes*.

The voting was conducted in a comparatively quiet

manner at the various precincts throughout the Territory. Along the frontier some illegal voting was suffered by the Free State party and the officers of the different election boards, but it was not practiced to an extent to materially interfere with the result. It was decidedly the fairest election ever held in the Territory, and the result, despite the disadvantageous circumstances attending it, was, in the highest degree, satisfactory to the friends of freedom in Kansas, and throughout the Union.

When the Commissioners appointed to declare the result, made their official report, it was as follows :

“To accept the English proposition, - 1,788

To reject that proposition, - - - - 11,300”

And so the long struggle was over ! The cunningly devised scheme had completely failed to accomplish its purpose. It had been conceived and prosecuted in opposition to some of the greatest minds of the party from which it emanated, it had shorn that party of its power in the North, and when in its short-sightedness, it expected to reap the harvest of its broken faith, it found the coveted possession still as far beyond its reach as when it first attempted its subjugation. May the lesson be not wholly lost on future rulers and law-makers !

The emigration from the “ States ” to Kansas during the latter part of August and early September,

greatly exceeded that of any previous portion of the summer, and a rapid improvement was constantly being wrought in the face and character of the Territory. About this time some excitement was created in certain localities, by a number of young ladies taking advantage of the preëmption laws, to secure homes for themselves and relatives. Some of the writers from Kansas denounced the process by which these young ladies obtained their claims as reprehensible and deserving of censure, and considerable feeling was elicited in some places in regard to the subject. In my limited stay in the Territory, I had been impressed a number of times with the heroism manifested by the women of Kansas; and although my allusions to them in this volume have, of necessity, been meagre, I was so convinced of the injustice done the sex by the letter-writers alluded to, that I instituted an inquiry into the circumstances attending some of the cases occurring, or that had taken place, with the following result.

One of the slandered young ladies is a Miss Mary Partridge, a sister to the lamented George Partridge, who was killed at the battle of Qsawattomie. During the most dangerous times of that gloomy period of Kansas history, she rode as a scout, and not unfrequently took a turn at standing guard at nights, so that her wearied-out brothers might have some rest.

Her parents are old and needy, having been plundered of their property by roving guerrilla parties, and reduced to poverty. In common with their daughter, they are members of church, and are noble specimens of the old Puritan character. They would scorn to commit an immoral, or dishonest action. They have living in the family an orphan girl, who has been an inmate of the household from her infancy. Upon Miss Partridge has mainly devolved the care and education of this child ; and on the strength of the existing relationship she preëmpted her land. Her father having been impoverished by the ruffians of the border, she borrowed money of a friend to pay for the property, and is now (or was) working in Lawrence at day's works, to earn sufficient to return the borrowed money, so she and her parents may have a home to live in during their old age.

Another of these injured young ladies is a Miss Sarah G. Wattles, the daughter of a gentleman for some time the junior editor of the *Herald of Freedom*. Miss Wattles, seeing that her father's means were exhausted by his generosity to the sufferers by the various Missourian invasions, determined, with the self-reliance of a true woman, to help herself. She accordingly took her sister and an orphan boy living in the family, and went from Lawrence to Linn Co. In the neighborhood of Moneka she selected a claim which

she immediately settled on and improved. Assisted by some friends she succeeded in paying for the land, and is now living on it with her father, in a comfortable house, surrounded by fine crops of corn, potatoes, &c.

While living in this manner, she wrote a letter in reply to an urgent request of her relations in the east, to leave Kansas and return to a safe and quiet home. As the letter was published at the time in the *Herald of Freedom*, it will be no breach of confidence to present an extract of the same to the reader. She said :

“ I like to live here *very much* ; I would not be at all willing to make our home anywhere else. As to whether I like it as well as in Newark, the two places are so utterly dissimilar in every respect, that I do not know how to compare them. The things for which I like Newark are entirely wanting here. The comfort, the elegance, the refinement and educational advantages are things we hope and work for, patiently and earnestly. And O ! how I long for peace, that we may the sooner have security and rest ; and I long for schools. But what I love Kansas for is her great beauty and fertility, and for her sufferings. The very hardships I have borne here, and the political strife, and the great wrongs inflicted on us, and the unjust and savage war which we have passed through, have all made me love Kansas as I love no other place on earth.”

I might cite other instances scarcely less striking, but I feel that enough has already been written in the preceding pages of this work, to convince the reader that the women of Kansas have borne their full share in the hardships and sufferings of the settlers of that distracted land, and are entitled to commensurate honor from the heart of every sympathizer in the welfare of Kansas throughout Christendom.

A few weeks after the election I paid a visit to Capt. Montgomery. I expected to shortly leave that portion of the Territory, and I went to pay my parting respects to the man to whom Kansas owed such a debt of gratitude, and for whom I entertained so high an esteem. The day selected for my visit being oppressively warm, I ambled leisurely along, keeping as much as possible in the shade of the timber of Little Sugar, until I arrived at his residence. As much has been said by sundry correspondents from Kansas relative to the immoral character of Montgomery, and his carrying on a guerrilla warfare to enrich himself and followers, I will give a brief but truthful description of his residence.

Imagine to yourself, O reader, a rude log building, not exceeding ten by twelve in dimension, situated on a gentle elevation ; the height of the structure not over eight feet, and containing but one door and window ; the whole covered with a rough shed roof of



split strips of oak, and you will have a tolerable fair idea of the abode where, according to the *testimony of these correspondents*, is stored ill-gotten wealth beyond computation.

O ! shame, shame on the whole breed of scribes and *doughty knights of the quill*, who week after week and month after month, in their one-sided versions of what they were willfully ignorant, maligned and villified the character of a man greatly their superior in all the attributes of manhood. I do not wish to convey the impression that I deem Montgomery perfect in all respects. He has his faults, as who has not, but they are faults of the *head* not of the *heart*; and there breathes not to-day upon the soil of Kansas a purer or truer patriot than James Montgomery. The wealth of the Californias could not seduce him from his allegiance to the principles of freedom, nor all the soldiery of the federal Union cow or intimidate him from proffering his services to liberty when in need of his strong arm to maintain her just rights.

Aye, and despite the sneers and libels of *salaried* correspondents, who from mercenary motives have sought to ignore and misrepresent his true position, at home and amid the scene of his labors, the patriot has his reward. There, whatever the world may enjoy as its opinion, and whatever may live in future histories of Kansas, his services are properly appreciated, and go where

you may among the free-squatters of Southern Kansas, you will find in conversation on the eventful scenes through which the settlers have passed, that a *man had better hold his peace* than say aught derogatory to the character of James Montgomery.

I found the object of my quest at home ; he having been suffering for several days from an attack of fever. He was sitting up, however, engaged in looking over the mail, which one of his boys had just brought him from the office. His wife, a tall, fine-looking woman, was getting dinner, and his only child of any size, a girl of some fourteen years, was looking over her father's shoulder, enjoying the news with him. Dinner was soon announced, and after a short prayer by the head of the household, we commenced partaking of the simple food before us. After dinner he showed me a number of presents given him while on a recent visit at Lawrence. Among them was a volume of Mrs. Robinson's "*History of Kansas*," with the presentation written on the fly-leaf by the hand of the fair author herself.

The conversation during my brief stay was highly interesting, causing time to slip unheeded ; but ever and anon as my eyes glanced around the small, small room and noted its few simple contents, I sighed for the power to invoke the presence of the olden defamers of Montgomery to see what I saw, and behold what I

beheld in his rude squatter home, the remembrance of which I shall bear with me through life evermore.

After remaining as long as I could consistently with other engagements, I bade him and family a regretful adieu and took my departure. That the blessings of that Providence he reveres may attend his footsteps to the close of life, and preserve the liberty of the land he fought to free, is the fervent prayer of the writer.

The evening of the same day I was called upon to sever another link in the chain of association, that had endeared Kansas to me, to a far greater degree than I was aware before I came to sunder one by one the bonds of connection with her soil. It was parting with my pony—with poor Prince. I had sold him to a settler who had taken a fancy to him, having no further use for him, and the new owner had come that evening to bear away my treasure. He was of Indian breed, and so teachable that although I had possessed him but a few months, I had succeeded in learning him almost as many diverting performances as ever acquired by a showman's or circus-rider's pony. He was greatly attached to me, and would come at my call or whistle, from the best of pasture ; follow me about like a dog wherever I wanted him to ; lay down at my bidding, etc. I could not but reciprocate in a measure his fondness for me, and will the reader smile when I assure him that not the least of my trials in

leaving Southern Kansas, was parting with poor Prince, who had been my trusty companion in many a wild and dangerous journey and exploration. But the separation was inevitable, and I walked away to avoid seeing the stranger put the bit between the teeth of the unwilling mouth that always opened so willingly for me, and the saddle upon the back that always bent to receive its burthen.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CLOSING REMARKS.

"Henceforth to the sunset,  
Unchecked on her way,  
Shall liberty follow  
The march of the day."—WHITTIER.

DEEMING that a brief description of the soil, climate, etc., of Kansas will be acceptable to those of my readers who meditate emigrating thither, I will devote a few pages to that purpose.

Kansas is a rolling, prairie country. It therefore differs from much of the Western land, which is flat and monotonous. The timber is chiefly confined to the borders of the creeks and rivers, although in some portions of the Territory it covers the mounds and higher elevations of the country. These streams are so numerous, especially in the Southern part of the Territory, that the prairies are rarely more than four or five miles in width. The chief varieties of timber are walnut, oak, sycamore, hickory, cottonwood, maple, etc.

The soil is rich and deep ; a dark loam several feet deep, on a porous subsoil. The soil rests on a limestone basis, underlying seemingly the whole Territory. It is mountain limestone ; the highest rock known to geologists, and will always be a cheap and inexhaustible fertilizer of the soil. A coarse, gray, carboniferous strata is nearest the surface, but it is only on the crests of the hills and prairie promontories that this dips out, and it therefore encumbers but little ground. Beneath this strata lies a blue or red sandstone, easily worked, and under it a finer quality of limestone.

In many parts of the Territory, coal, of greater value to the settlers than its rumored mines of Gold, has been discovered in abundance. It is chiefly found along the banks of the creeks and rivers, and is already used for many purposes by the inhabitants. Lead has also been found. Most of the creeks and ravine have stone bottoms, and the country to a great extent is destitute of these horrible sloughs which are so common throughout the West, and which at certain seasons of the year are almost impassable to the traveler. But little expense is required to make roads that will be good throughout the year, as the soil is of such a formation that even after a heavy storm a few hour's sun dries its surface.

The climate in its general features resembles that



of Southern Illinois and Indiana, only it is dryer and more salubrious. The winters are mild ; but little snow falls, and work cattle are frequently turned loose by the settlers in the fall of the year, to subsist on the prairies throughout the winter. The most serious inconvenience is the high winds, which are characteristic of the country. There is always a breeze ; often a high wind, as the air is wafted fresh from the mountains, meeting with no obstructions on the plains. The frequency of hills, however, impairs its force after reaching the Territory, and affords plenty of shelter.

The scenery is particularly pleasing. Generally speaking, throughout the West there is a sameness of landscape, but in Kansas the scenery is ever varying. Mound, valley, stream and woodland all combine to give it a charm, and it only needs the hand of art to make it one of the most substantially beautiful countries in the world. Its sky is also one of the clearest and loveliest that over-arches the earth. I do not think that Italy itself can possess a more gorgeous heaven than Kansas. Some of its cloud and sunset views are grand beyond words, and I have gazed on them at times until my whole soul has been filled with the emotions awakened by their loveliness. The natural loveliness of Kansas is remarked by almost all who visit it, who have any eye for the beauties of nature. Rev. Henry Pierpont, the venerable poet, in a

visit to the Territory, remarked that he had traveled all over the United States, and visited the ancient seats of empire in the old world—sunny Italy, Greece, the middle and northern countries of Europe, etc.,—but in all his journeyings his eyes had never rested on such loveliness as he was allowed to look upon in Kansas.

Most vegetables indigenous to the New England and Middle States do well, when cultivated, in Kansas. It must in time become a great fruit country as both soil and climate are particularly adapted to its culture. Considerable attention is already paid to the subject, and there are a number of fine nurseries in various parts of the Territory. For grazing purposes it is unsurpassed. The natural prairie grass greatly resembles Eastern meadow grass, but it is of a better quality, and from it all the hay of the country is made. The staple productions of the North, wheat, corn, oats, &c., are all cultivated with success. Corn, especially, produces a luxuriant yield.

Without a doubt Kansas presents in many respects decided advantages over other portions of the West. In all the Western States land of a good quality, in good locations, is held at high prices, but in Kansas it is, as yet, cheap, while its many natural advantages of soil, climate, etc., etc., must inevitably make it increase in value rapidly. There will doubtless be a

home market in Kansas for years to come, as each year's immigration is sufficient to consume the surplus produce of the settlers. Every township six miles square has two sections of land which government has set apart for school purposes, and which, if properly managed and not sold until land becomes valuable, will produce a School Fund of from \$10,000 to \$15,000 for each township. The annual income of this ought to render the school facilities equal to those of any State in the Union.

As the most desirable tracts are rapidly being taken up, those intending to seek homes in Kansas will do well to lose as little time as possible in carrying their resolutions into effect. The progress of the West is so rapid that few Eastern people have a correct conception of it. The exultant "Eureka" may spring to the lips of the self-exiled wanderer from the East as he crosses the threshold of the West, but it dies away unuttered when he becomes familiar with it, and compares its varied improvements with the time in which they were accomplished, for then his mind is filled with emotions of wonder at finding the West so different from what he had imagined. The rich luxuriant prairies—fresh as when they came from the plastic hand of the Creator—are like what he had conceived; so are the forests, rivers, mounds, etc., but the improvements made by the pioneers far surpass

his expectations. As he surveys the evidences of civilization around him, and reflects that all has been accomplished within a few years, he is lost in amazement. It is only after he has familiarized himself with frontier life, and been an eye-witness to its rapid changes, that his astonishment ceases to exist.

Kansas, so far from being an exception to the above generalism, is a striking exemplification of its truthfulness. Its past growth has been unprecedented in Territorial history, and its future prospects were never more promising than at the present period. Planting the principles they revere, on the soil of their adoption, and saying to the Southern Sanhedrim "*thus far shalt thou go, and no farther,*" from the rugged hills of New England, the sterile valleys of the Middle States, and the broad prairies of the West, the stalwart sons of freedom there commingle, eventually to make Kansas the "bright, particular star" in the glorious galaxy of our National Union, and the home of a free and happy posterity.

## NOTES.

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(1)—PAGE 18.

A Mexican term, signifying a number of wagons forming an encampment.

(2)—PAGE 56.

The squad was a portion of Capt. Hamilton's guerrilla company, and was hastening from the Territory after the commission of the Marais des Cygnes massacre.

(3)—PAGE 66.

The speech quoted rests on the authority of one of Capt. Hamilton's own men, by the name of Mattock, who was some time after its delivery captured and lodged in jail at Paris, Linn Co., Kansas, where he made a full confession of every thing relating to the tragedy.

(4)—PAGE 92.

An old resident of the Territory, by the name of Reese.

(5)—PAGE 102.

In recording this story and the one that precedes it, I have endeavored to give the language of the narrators as fully as copious notes taken at the time would enable me to do. The name of the hero of the last narrative was Dean. I frequently saw him afterwards, and have every reason to believe his sad narrative truthful.

(6)—PAGE 115.

The name of the family was Lamb. Before I left the Territory his brothers returned.

(7)—PAGE 231.

I have not the letter in question by me, but believe I quote him correctly.

(8)—PAGE 232.

The speech of Gov. Denver and those that follow, are taken from notes made during their delivery.



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